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IN HIS OLD AGE.

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FRANCESCO PETRARCA

THE FIRST MODERN MAN OF LETTERS

HIS LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

A STUDY OF THE EARLY FOURTEENTH CENTURY
(1304–1347)

VOLUME I
EARLY YEARS AND LYRIC POEMS

BY
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TO

THE MEMORY OF

C. M. T.

A BELOVED SISTER

WHO HELPED AND ENCOURAGED

ME IN MY WORK

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME.

PREFACE TO VOLUMES I AND II

PERHAPS there is no greater gap in the knowledge of European history possessed by the average educated man than that between the Fall of the Western Empire (476) and the Fall of the Eastern Empire (1453), or the period commonly known as the "Middle Ages." His interest may be aroused by some crumbling ruin in his own neighbourhood; he may even be a subscriber to the local Archæological Society; but there is a chasm in his mind between the World-Empire under which Christianity first arose, and the array of competing nations—great and small—which figure in the European map to-day. He has no clear idea of the conditions under which the states of modern Europe awoke to national consciousness, in spite of a despotic and centralizing Papacy, or of the extent of their debt to the extinct Empire of Ancient Rome.

The unlearned are apt to be repelled by the "institutional history," which has advanced so remarkably in our own day; nor are they usually attracted by the "general views" and "streams of tendency" which too often deprive concise surveys of long periods of all human interest. We need something of a different kind if the Middle Ages are to become vivid to us; we must call in the aid of Historical Biography, and try to recover from contemporary documents the details of a single life, intellectually in advance of its time, and passed in the most enlightened region of Europe. In this way only can we be made to realize that the men of the fourteenth century—when the seeds of the new times were germinating—were, despite external differences, more like ourselves than we had been apt to suppose. If history, in the words of M. Brunetière, is "the art of living in bygone centuries," then we must learn that art by noting points of resemblance to our own age, as well as points of difference from it, in our investigation of times long past. We must divest

ourselves of our insularity, and recognize that space is no more a barrier than time against " that touch of nature which makes the whole world kin."

It is mainly with this object in view that I have attempted in these volumes to describe the earlier life of the Italian poet, Francesco Petrarca, whom we familiarly call " Petrarch." Probably no other writer between Cicero and Erasmus has left such ample material for the illustration of his own life and thought. Though of comparatively humble birth, he had risen by the middle of his career to be a European celebrity ; he had become such, not merely by his learning and poetic gift, but by the rare " humanity " which made him a citizen of the whole world. England could scarcely have produced at that time a man of the same type. We already had our giants in Science and Philosophy—our Roger Bacon, who anticipated some of the scientific triumphs of later ages ; our William of Ockham, the " Invincible Doctor," whose daring political theories caused Popes to tremble on their throne. But we find no trace of a true " man of letters," conscious of his own worth and individuality. It is in Italy, the cradle in Christian times of ancient learning and of liberty, that this phenomenon first appears.

But can we fairly study the Middle Ages through Petrarch, who seems in some respects so far in advance of them ? Dr. Saintsbury expresses the opinion (*History of Criticism,* I. p. 456) that " he has nothing to do with the Middle Ages." Yet at least he lived in them ; and to refuse to consider him at all, as that distinguished critic does, because he helped to make his own age one of transition, is to leave him suspended, like Mahommed's coffin, between heaven and earth—it is to make his vast superiority to his own age (which elsewhere Dr. Saintsbury warns us not to exaggerate) a deliberate excuse for neglect. There is also Renan's phrase (*Averroès et l'Averroïsme,* 3rd ed., 1866, p. 328), which has been " annexed " by almost all subsequent writers on Petrarch, that he was " the first modern man." It may be epigrammatically true ; yet, as I think this book will show, he was no more able than other pioneers to rid himself of the trammels of the age in which he was born. With remarkable perspicacity Petrarch once describes himself as " set upon the confines of two kinds of people," and (in the same sentence) as " looking both backwards and forwards " (*Rer. Mem.* I. ii.) ; and

elsewhere (*Ep. Post.*) he says he dislikes his own age so much that " he would rather have been born in any other." Yet while thus, in a sense, " the child of two eras," he may be described not inaptly as " the first modern man of letters." He had that passion for books as books which we too exclusively associate with the ages of printing, though it was felt by many scholars of antiquity; he was the first, since the decline of Rome, to possess the literary—as apart from the creative—instinct. He was distinguished alike by the strength and by the weakness of his tribe—by a tenacious memory, fertility in ideas, and a remarkable power of expressing them, as well as by irritability, extreme vanity, and an unpractical habit of mind. He illustrates ancient times by his whole-souled devotion to their study, and modern by the prophetic spirit which heralded their advent; while he illuminates the gulf between the two by his contact with it in the flesh. He thus constitutes a link between two widely parted civilizations; and his firm belief in revealed truth distinguishes him from many of his successors in the later Renaissance.

These general remarks will, I hope, receive special confirmation in the following chapters. But we cannot understand the contradictions so patent in his character and his life without a thorough acquaintance with the political and social conditions of his day, and, above all, with the ecclesiastical environment of his early career. This must be my excuse for introducing the historical chapters on the Papacy, Italy, and the Empire, which may appear at first to be unwarrantable digressions. Yet there is not a chapter which is not in fact intimately connected with his life-story. Some critics seem to hold that the provinces of Biography and History are wholly distinct. It is true that the biographer who frequently wanders off—as Masson did in his *Life of Milton*—into the field of contemporary history is perpetually pushing his hero into the background, and so far violates the elementary rules of his art. The late Sir E. T. Cook, in his *Literary Recreations*, even asserts that a book proclaiming itself "The Life and Times of Somebody" is " a hybrid, little likely to possess artistic merit." The pertinence of this objection appears to me to depend on whether the " Times " are proximate or remote. If they are reasonably near, the reader will possess some knowledge of the state of society and of the course

of public events ; if they are remote, he will find it hard to get the "focus" of his instrument for viewing distant objects adjusted to his own peculiarities of vision. Incidents of great importance may appear to him small, because he has not perceived their true relation to others, which stand out more clearly. In short, if they are judiciously intermixed, Biography and History may render reciprocal service to each other. Not only is History "the essence of innumerable biographies," but, conversely, the best interpretation of an age may often be found in the records of a single life. The mind requires a single view-point—like that which is seized by the genius of an historical painter in order to concentrate the significance of perhaps a long series of events into one famous scene. There ought, of course, to be a careful attention to detail in the composition as regards costume and other accessories ; but there is need also of one or more central figures, in whose attitudes or countenances the emotions of the moment may be expressed.

No less important, if we are to realize vividly the conditions of a vanished age, is an abundance of illustrative details. These are sometimes supplied in the Middle Ages, when the imagination of some chronicler has been fired by a striking occurrence ; but they are rarely to be found illustrating the whole course of a single life. Their absence is not so much due to the lapse of ages ; it is rather that the men of those days were too preoccupied with the hard facts of the present to be concerned with their own personality. There is an immense mass of Latin correspondence belonging to the period ; but for the reason here given it seldom affords much material either to the historian or to the biographer. In this respect, however, the letters of Petrarch introduce us to a new world. Not only are they very numerous ; but they possess a literary flavour which is as surprising as it is welcome. With a few exceptions, they are learned without being pedantic ; they display considerable power of description ; and they disclose the character and warm feelings of the writer to an extent hitherto unexampled. No doubt they have "the defects of their qualities." But in literature, as in life, we must never demand the impossible ; taken as they are, they constitute a considerable achievement. In the next two centuries, though the first printed copies were full of textual errors, they were eagerly read, until the victory of the vernaculars consigned them

to an unmerited oblivion. Many of them appear here in English for the first time; a few even of the most famous have only been rendered previously from an Italian version of the Latin.

These letters are the principal original sources of my two volumes; but their information has been supplemented by the researches of foreign scholars, without which some of them would be far less intelligible. So copious is the material that selection has been difficult; but all those letters which throw light on Petrarch's early career have been utilized, if not textually quoted. A strict critic may perhaps consider that I have drawn upon them more freely than the contents of several would warrant. But it is scarcely fair to decide such a matter by modern standards. Distance of time lends a value both to facts and ideas which intrinsically they may not possess. The commonest objects unearthed in a Roman station, or in a Benedictine abbey, naturally arouse far more interest than others, not so very dissimilar, which we see in a modern house. In the same way we encounter a familiar thought or turn of expression in a document six hundred years old with all the pleasure of surprise. Some letters I have introduced for the simple reason that in my judgment they are necessary to complete the picture of the man.

In the biography of an historical character, for which his letters constitute almost the only contemporary source, such letters form unavoidably the main texture of which the narrative portion of it is composed. But I have not been unmindful of a "caveat" which Sir Sidney Colvin enters in the Introduction to his *Letters of R. L. Stevenson.*

> "Surely nothing," he says, "more checks the flow of a narrative than its interruption by stationary blocks of correspondence; nothing more disconcerts the reader than a too frequent or too abrupt alternation between the subject of a biography speaking in his letters and the writer of it speaking in his narrative."

But he goes on to concede that where letters deal chiefly with facts and events, as Macaulay's for example, they may be successfully handled in this way. I am not sure that the reader does not welcome this "alternation of voices" as a relief in cases where the letters betray a marked individuality. Petrarch's

letters are all self-revealing, though many of them contain less a description of passing circumstances and events than the expression of his own feelings about them, which is not quite the same thing. Such letters, in my opinion, find their fittest place in the narrative; but in the main I believe Sir Sidney's caution to be sound. In the biographical chapters themselves I have therefore avoided "stationary blocks of correspondence"; but I have placed at the end of certain chapters, translations of letters which illustrate those chapters, but need no further comment than has already been made. The task of translating Petrarch is a hard one—not so much from the difficulty of the Latin, as because some of his sentences are inordinately long, and because nearly all contain rhetorical redundancies which would be tiresome in modern English. I have pruned down some of these sentences, and have omitted others; but my main aim has been to render faithfully his exact meaning.

For Petrarch's Latin works—apart from his *Metrical Letters* and those edited by Fracassetti—I have used the Basle folio of 1554, which is one of the best of the early editions. Yet the text contains so many errors that it is often unintelligible; and it is to be hoped that the task undertaken by the Sexcentenary Congress at Rome in 1904—that of producing a standard edition of the Latin works—will before long come to fruition. It was necessarily suspended during the war, but has since been resumed, and is now making fair progress.

The number of Petrarch's biographers has been "Legion"—from the short memoirs, of which nearly a dozen were written within a century of his death, to the elaborate studies of the last century. Most of the leading nations have contributed to the list, but the best work has naturally come from Italy and France—the countries with which the poet was himself connected. In the eighteenth century the Abbé J. F. de Sade produced three bulky quartos—modestly called, not a *Life*, but *Memoirs*—which gave a great impulse to the study of the subject. This writer is too imaginative, especially in his speculations about "Laura," and in his use of the Canzoniere; and he too freely substitutes assertion for conjecture. But his work can still be consulted with profit, and his zeal in exploring all available sources—even the many then unprinted letters—was most praiseworthy. The first two English biographies—those by Mrs. Dobson

(1775) and the poet Thomas Campbell (1841)—are little more than abridged translations of de Sade; but Campbell had some acquaintance with the criticisms passed on the French work by Tiraboschi (1771) and Baldelli (1797). The last century witnessed the publication of two excellent commentaries (with translations) on portions of the collected letters—that on the *Metrical Letters* by Domenico Rossetti (1829–1834) and that on the *Letters of Familiar Intercourse*, the *Various Letters*,[1] and the *Letters of Old Age*, by Giuseppe Fracassetti (1863–1870). Fracassetti also issued separately an emended text of the first two prose collections, but unfortunately he did not live to perform the same service for the last. These works are highly creditable to Italian scholarship; they have not yet been superseded, and are still indispensable to every student of the Letters. The critical judgments of Fracassetti are sometimes at fault, especially in matters of chronology; and the time has perhaps come when not only his text, but some of his voluminous notes should be subjected to revision. But all investigators in the same field must acknowledge their deep obligation to this scholar, whose patient researches have made their way infinitely smoother. His excellent tables, references, and indexes will have saved them untold labour.

The celebration in 1874 of the fifth century of the poet's death inaugurated a new era of Petrarch study, especially in Italy. During the next forty years there was an immense increase in the output of books and articles on his career, as is evidenced by the Petrarch Library at Cornell University, collected by the late Willard Fiske, the catalogue of which (Clarendon Press. 1916) contains more than 4,000 items (including editions of the *Opera Latina* and the *Rime*) principally by Italian writers. It is obviously impossible, especially for a non-Italian, to cover the whole of so vast a field; but I think I may claim to have consulted the most important works dealing with the period under notice. The notes will bear witness to the extent of my debt; but I must especially mention for the Italian poems the critical text of G. Mestica (1893), the essays of Professor A. Bartoli (1884), and the commentary by the poet Giosué Carducci (1876). Other

[1] Fracassetti's "Variæ" include most of the "Variæ" in Petrarch's collection under that title; but they are supplemented by numerous before unpublished letters from other manuscript sources.

writers on special aspects of the subject who have helped me much are G. Finzi, C. Segré, and B. Zumbini.

In France the finished " study " by M. Alfred Mézières of the French Academy (1869) and the short life by M. F. Fuzet (mainly from the religious aspect) (1883) continued the tradition of national interest in the biography. But by far the most notable book on Petrarch as a scholar is the *Pétrarque et L'Humanisme* (latest edition, 2 vols., 1907), by M. Pierre le Nolhac. To this my obligations are incalculable; indeed, it was the perusal of its first edition (1892) which gave me the first inspiration for my own labours. Its introductory chapters have appeared in English (Humanist's Library, 1907, at Boston (Mass.)), but it is not so well known in this country as it deserves to be. Another leading " Petrarchist " in the same country is M. Henry Cochin, whose short monographs and essays have been most helpful; they are marked by great learning and a deep love of the subject. Other French books which I have used with profit are the translations of M. Victor Develay and various papers on Vaucluse, the best of which is by M. Gustave Bayle.

In Germany Dr. G. Koerting published in 1878 the most complete study of the whole Life and Works which has so far appeared. Although extending to over 700 octavo pages, it is described by himself as " a mere sketch "; and he expresses a hope, which has not been fulfilled, that Professor P. Villari would undertake a more thorough and exhaustive biography. Dr. Koerting's learning is wide, and his general views suggestive; but these are sometimes marred by overstatement, especially when he is striving to be most original.

America, which now possesses the best Petrarch Library, has done at least as much as—if not more than—our own country to popularize the results of recent research. The scholarly *Petrarch* of Messrs. J. H. Robinson and H. W. Rolfe (1898) contains more translations of the Letters than any other work in English; there are posthumous essays by Professor M. A. Potter (1917), and even American ladies have found the subject attractive. May A. Ward published a short sketch of the *Life and Works* as long ago as 1891, and studies in the correspondence by Harriet W. Preston and Louise Dodge appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* in 1893.

In England—except for Mr. H. Reeve's little manual

(Foreign Classics, 1879) together with critical notices in J. A. Symond's *Encyclopædia Britannica* article (1879), and in his *Renaissance in Italy* (1875–1891)—the study of the Life and Latin works was strangely neglected for more than two generations. But Mr. H. C. Hollway-Calthrop's popular *Life and Times* (1907) removed some of this reproach, though unfortunately it contains no references; I am proud to claim him as a personal friend, who has given me help in various ways. His book was followed by Mrs. Jerrold's volume (1909), which is at its best in the chapters on the Italian poems. My own work was planned, and in part written, before either of these two appeared; but its scope and purpose, as explained above, is wholly different from theirs. My aim—perhaps unattainable—has been to produce a book sufficiently interesting to please the "general reader," yet at the same time sufficiently "up to date" in its information to be welcomed by scholars and students. For the sake of the latter I have given elaborate references, and have tried not to shirk one of the many difficult problems involved; while my humble advice to the former would be to "skip" all notes, discussions, and excursuses, and to read the main narrative as an "essay in Historical Biography." I am conscious that it has defects from both points of view; and although part of the two final volumes is already written, I have resolved that its continuation must depend on the reception given to these earlier volumes by the English and foreign public.[1] The second volume, which is now in the press, will close with the chief turning-point in Petrarch's life—his migration in 1347 to Italy, whence he intended never to return. His ambition was to free himself from the two chains of a hopeless love and an exacting patronage; and within a few months both these chains were to be finally severed by the "Black Death."

In the title of the book I have given to the poet the rather meaningless Italian name, which he chose to adopt in his later years (see Excursus I.). But I have not considered myself bound in the text to discard the more familiar dissyllable, which has been consecrated by centuries of use in French and English. Although Landor has been pleased to call "Petrarch" an "error" (*Pentameron and Minor Works*, p. 373), it seems to me

[1] The work could have been more fairly judged if Volumes I. and II. had appeared together; but the inevitable delay may have its advantages.

a fitting distinction for the founder of modern scholarship that his name should have assumed in the North, as it were by inadvertence, a quasi-classical form. It is a tribute to his immense contemporary renown that even to Chaucer, who was but twenty-five years his junior, he is " Petrark " ; and personally I would as soon give up the forms " Virgil," " Horace," or " Livy " as deprive the first Humanist of this well-won distinction. I would add that my practice (along with most modern writers) has been to give the names of Popes and other sovereigns in the English form, but all other names in the form of that language which belonged to their bearers by inheritance.

E. H. R. T.

May, 1925.

Note.—Volume II. is in preparation

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ABBREVIATIONS IN THE REFERENCES TO PETRARCH'S WORKS, ETC.

B. ed.	= *Franc. Petr. Opera*, edition of *Hen. Petri*. Basle, 1554 (2 vols. fol.).
F.	= *Epistolæ de Rebus Familiaribus*, Libri XXIV. in the Latin text of G. Fracassetti (Florence, 1859), 3 vols. 8vo (referred to as "Frac.").
Var.	= *Epistolæ Variæ* in Vol. III. of the same edition.
Sen.	= *Epistola Seniles*, Libri XVI. in the Basle edition of 1554, and referred to (as regards Books XV.—XVII.) as *Sen.* (Frac.), with the changed numeration in Fracassetti's translation (Florence, 1892), 2 vols. 12mo.
Ep. Metr.	= *Epistolæ Metricæ*, Libri III.
Frac. (*It.*)	= Fracassetti's translation (with notes) of the above two first collections of letters (Florence, 1892), 5 vols. 12mo.
Adnot. in F. P.	= Fracassetti's, Latin notes on the two above collections, 8vo (Fermo, 1890).
S. T.	= *Epistolæ sine Titulo.*
Ep. Post.	= *Epistle to Posterity* (autobiography).
De Rem. Utr. Fort.	= *De Remediis Utriusque Fortunæ*, Libri II.
Vit. Sol.	= *De Vitâ Solitariâ*, Libri II.
Ot. Rel.	= *De Otio Religiosorum*, Libri II.
Ver. Sap.	= *De Verâ Sapientiâ*, Dialogi II.
Secret	= *Secretum sive De Contemptu Mundi*, Dialogi III.
Rer. Mem.	= *Rerum Memorandarum*, Libri IV.
Epit. Vir. Ill.	= *Vitarum Virorum Illustrium Epitome.*
De Vir. Ill.	= F. P.'s work *De Viris Illustribus* in the edition of L. Razzolini, two vols. in three, 8vo (Bologna, 1874–1879).
Itin. Syr.	= *Itinerarium Syriacum.*
De sui ips. et al. ign.	= *De Sui ipsius et aliorum Ignorantia.*
Apol. c. Gall.	= *Apologia contra Gallum.*
Invect. cont. Med.	= *Invectivarum contra medicum quendam*, Libri IV.
Ecl.	= *Bucolicorum*, Eclogæ XII.
P. et l'Hum.	= *Pétrarque et l'Humanisme*, par Pierre de Nolhac, 2 vols. (Paris, 1907).
De Sade	= *Memoires pour la vie de F. P.*, par J. F. X. de Sade, 3 vols. 4to (Amsterdam, 1764).

BOOK I

HISTORICAL SURVEY—PETRARCH'S EXILE AND EDUCATION

FRANCESCO PETRARCA

CHAPTER I

ITALY AND THE PAPACY (1300–1304)

THE story of Petrarch's life is more closely connected, both directly and indirectly, than that of any other prominent man of his day with the whole course of European events in the first three quarters of the fourteenth century. It is therefore advisable to take an introductory survey of the state of Italy and France at the time of his birth, and especially of the mazes of Italian politics. Such an introduction is the more necessary because the four years with which this chapter deals mark the close of one epoch and the beginning of another in the history of Europe. So far as the future of the Papacy was concerned, they were fraught with the gravest consequences not only to him who is the main subject of these pages, but to his fatherland of Italy, and to the rest of Christendom.

In the long struggle between the See of Rome and the Holy Roman Empire during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the Popes at last proved the victors, and for a time their success seemed the triumph of liberty. But the victory was achieved by the assumption of powers undreamt of in simpler ages; and though at the moment these pretensions may have passed uncontested, there were hidden forces at work which threatened to undermine them at their source.

The chief of these was the rising spirit of nationality in the outlying portions of the European system. The sovereigns of England had consistently maintained that they owed no allegiance to the central Empire; and as these sovereigns admitted and paid feudal homage for their continental possessions to the Kings of France, they acted as a centrifugal force which affected their

powerful neighbour. Both kingdoms—England as a result of the Conquest—had accepted the provincial system of the Church, though in England the admission was hedged about with reservations that were little to the taste of " the Church's Head." But the weakness of the Empire at its extremities (and even at its centre, reckoning Italy as such) was bound to react—although the Popes failed to see it—to the disadvantage of the Church, unless the Church could aspire to take the place of the tottering Empire. The last was the dream which haunted the imaginations of the greatest pontiffs of the past, such as Gregory VII. and Innocent III. They could not but see that, while the Church had a provincial system, compact and well organized, the Empire —unlike that old World-Empire with which it boasted its identity —had practically none. Its claims, resting as they did on a misreading of past history, were too vague and shadowy to be realized.

Moreover, the distinction between things temporal and spiritual, which has been painfully taught to the modern Roman Church by the lessons of centuries, was then so finely drawn as to tend to become invisible. The Pope was constantly claiming, with or without the invitation of earthly rulers, to act as arbiter in their disputes on temporal matters. His policy, apart from the self-interest which so often vitiated it, may have been excellent in intention ; but it largely depended for its success, at the time with which we have to deal, on the tone which he saw fit to adopt towards the rulers of the rising nations. The thunders of ecclesiastical censure were now losing their terrors ; and the Pope's weakness consisted in the fact that the only material forces open to him lay at the disposal of these very rulers whom he was seeking to dominate. While the crusading spirit lasted, he could free himself from their threatening licence or ambition by sending them against the infidel, or even, if they were submissive, make use of troops collected for the Holy War for his own personal aims. As the wielder of merely moral force he needed consummate tact ; he needed also that his proceedings should be free from the least taint of self-seeking. But these requisites were seldom found together in any mediæval Pope. The Age of Faith regarded him as a personage so exalted that his head was apt to be turned by his elevation, unless he were capable of learning a severe lesson from the weakness of his position in Italy.

In order to remedy this weakness, a succession of Popes made it their settled policy to establish a temporal kingdom in Italy attached to the Holy See ; and any attempt to unite the peninsula under one sway, whether foreign or national, encountered during many centuries their relentless opposition.

I. The States of the Church

The origin of the Papal States as an independent kingdom must not detain us at length ; but a glance at the temporal power of the Popes in the thirteenth century is necessary in order to understand their policy at the beginning of the fourteenth and the subsequent decline of their power during their absence in France. When the former century dawned, the temporal sovereignty of the Pope was practically non-existent. The Emperors claimed, if they did not freely exercise, an overlordship over the whole of Italy, including the provinces of Naples and Sicily (which they had recently conquered) and the city of Rome. But their feudal rights over the free cities of northern and central Italy had recently received a severe check. The Emperor of the moment—Frederick II.—was a child of six, and his guardian was Pope Innocent III. This Pope, whose conception of his office reached a height only once afterwards asserted, seized the opportunity to increase the Papal power. He persuaded the Roman republic to change their Senator from an Imperial to a Papal officer, and attempted to make good the claims of the Holy See not only to the so-called " patrimony of St. Peter," but also to the cities of the Eastern Marches. A similar attempt to establish an authority in Tuscany, in consequence of the century-old gift of the Countess Matilda to the Papacy,[1] was defeated by the obstinate resistance of Florence and the other free communes. But in spite of their political alliance with these Guelf cities, the Popes never gave up the hope of adding Tuscany to their domain.

When Innocent died in 1216, their danger was from the firm union of the Empire with the kingdoms of Naples and Sicily in

[1] The gift was simply of her allodial lands and could not touch the feudal rights of the Empire ; but the Popes of course found it convenient to ignore this fundamental distinction.

the person of the able and unscrupulous Frederick II. This arrangement enabled their old enemy and former overlord to hold their newly won territory as it were in the grip of a vice, and it was the root-cause of their relentless enmity to the House of the Hohenstaufen. The Popes' claim [1] to the southern kingdom as a "fief" of their see had no more real foundation than the claims of Gregory and Innocent to the subjection of all other kingdoms to the Papacy; but if it was not fact, it was a convenient fiction which had long been tacitly admitted. In 1220 Frederick was compelled by Honorius III. (1216–1227) to swear that he would never unite this Papal "fief" to the Empire—an oath which he could not keep without breaking another binding him to maintain the rights of the Empire. It is curious that it was not till the long interregnum in that dignity (1254–1273), when the southern kingdom by accepting Manfred as its sovereign was already separate from it, that the Popes put forth all their power to destroy the obnoxious House in his person. The reason was that Manfred, though not Emperor, was the head of the Ghibelline, or Imperial, party in Italy, and that the Pope, as the active ally of the Guelf free cities, was determined to destroy Ghibellinism—then rampant throughout the peninsula—while the rights of the Empire were still in abeyance. The Pope's strength lay in the passion for liberty and dislike of feudalism which prevailed in these cities; but we must not forget that they used him simply as a tool, without any idea of substituting, as he hoped, his overlordship for that of the Emperor. But even then the contest seemed unequal, so powerful had the Imperial system become through the rule of the petty tyrants of the cities, while the Emperor resided in the south. At last Urban IV. (1261–1265), by what a papal historian calls "a master-stroke," [2] determined to call in the aid of Charles of Anjou, the brother of the French monarch. For the time the plan succeeded, and Charles obtained the Sicilian kingdom, like

[1] The sole ground for it was the fictitious "Donation of Constantine," in which "all the islands of the ocean" were feigned to have been granted to the successors of St. Peter. The original right of the Normans was simply that of conquest from the Eastern Empire; but they sought to regularize it by acknowledging Leo IX.'s overlordship, and the latter of course was all complaisance; henceforth he could argue, "If it were not our fief, why should the Normans admit the fact?"

[2] L'Abbe J. B. Christophe, *Histoire de la Papauté en le XIV^me^ siècle*, p. 70.

the Normans, by right of conquest and as a Papal "gift." It is one of the ironies of history that this substitution of one foreign master for another was the work of the "party of freedom" undertaken at the bidding of a French Pope. The national idea receded into the dim distance; and the Pope was to find in the powerful King of France, whose family he had helped to aggrandize, a sterner foe than the "Holy Roman Emperor."

During this long contest the Pope's authority at Rome became, through the strife of faction, almost a negligible quantity. Rome was the cockpit of the struggle between Guelf and Ghibelline, represented respectively by the families of Orsini and Colonna. Matthew Paris declares [1] that Innocent IV. (1243–1254), who showed so bold a front against the Empire, never entered his capital without a trembling anxiety as to his treatment by the lawless barons who held it in thrall. For this reason he resided so much at Assisi that the Senator Brancaleone sent him word that he would come and burn the town about his ears if he did not return to Rome. His successor, Alexander IV. (1254–1261), was driven out to Viterbo; and the next Pope, the Frenchman Urban IV., never entered Rome during his three years' pontificate. In those turbulent days few Popes could reside in Rome for any length of time, unless they were connected by some close tie with the Roman aristocracy. Of the nine immediate successors of Gregory IX. who successively occupied the see from 1241 to 1277, none were of Roman, and some not even of Italian, parentage; and their hold upon their own capital was always precarious—all the more because its emancipation from the Empire under Innocent III. was comparatively recent. The shortness of their reigns, averaging only four years, was unfavourable to a strong continuous policy.

But Nicholas III. (1277–1280), of the powerful Roman family of the Orsini, was able, during the eclipse of the Empire in Italy under Rudolf of Hapsburg, to give some strength and consistency to Innocent's scheme for a Papal Italian kingdom. In return for the promise of his coronation at Rome (which never took place), Rudolf ceded all the Imperial rights over the Romagna, the Duchy of Spoleto and the March of Ancona to the Pope, whose dominion now extended from the mouth of the Po to the frontiers of Naples, with the exception of Tuscany. His authority was

[1] Matthew Paris, *sub anno* 1253.

merely a kind of feudal protectorate; of effective occupation (in the modern sense) there was none, for the Pope had no power of raising an army, except through the nobles. Each free city retained its privileges as a republic—including the liberty of bartering them away to a successful "tyrant" and of resisting its "liege lord," when the fancy seized it. Moreover the elective sovereignty of the Papacy with its frequent interregna, the rapid changes on the Papal throne, and the consequent shifting of its policy—all tended to make the union little more than nominal.

Nicholas III., however, had a more immediate object than the founding of a Papal kingdom. He cleverly played off the shadowy authority of Rudolf against the perilously growing ascendancy of Charles of Anjou. Previous Popes had secured for the latter a ten-years' senatorship at Rome and the position of Imperial vicar in Tuscany. It was part of the bargain with Rudolf that these should be renounced, and renounced they were, though Charles yielded with a bad grace. His Roman towers and fortresses were resigned not to the Pope, but to the representatives of the Roman commune, and the only fruit which he reaped from the settlement was that the Empire recognized his right to the southern kingdom.

But at home the Pope's connection with the Roman nobility stood him in good stead, so that he ventured to rebuild the Vatican and Lateran palaces. He even managed to impose upon the Romans a new constitution, by which they bound themselves never to grant the senatorship, even for a short term, to any foreign potentate, or any foreigner of their own kinsmen, and to permit no one to hold the office for more than a year without the Pope's express permission. Apparently this limitation was not to bind the Pope himself; but whenever he was appointed—as frequently happened—the government was, by a curious fiction, entrusted to him not as Pope, but as a private person. This constitution, which was observed (with intervals) for a long period, led to a ceaseless struggle among the nobles for predominance in their own city; and when the Pope's power waned, whether from absence or want of influence, a welter of discord and lawlessness ensued.

II. The Papacy and the Sicilian Revolt

Nicholas was succeeded by a French Pope, Martin IV. (1281–1285), who violated this constitution to replace the Angevin in power at Rome; but soon afterwards the revolt of Sicily in 1282, known as the "Sicilian Vespers," completely obscured the fortunes of Charles. He died in 1285, leaving the rebellious islanders under the sway of Pedro, King of Aragon (Manfred's son-in-law), while his own son and successor, Charles the Lame, was a prisoner in their hands. Neither the Spaniards nor the islanders winced under the excommunication of three successive Popes, who were indignant at this unauthorized transference of a "papal fief." The last of the three, Nicholas IV. (1288–1292), was a Ghibelline in his sympathies, but he dared not reverse the policy of his predecessors. He even took the extreme step of bidding the new King Charles disregard the sworn provisions of the Treaty of Campo Franco, under which he had regained his liberty—so inveterate was the prejudice of the Papacy against any interference with its claims in Sicily. In Rome this Pope was a mere tool in the hands of the Colonna, and therefore an object of aversion to most of the other nobles. He gave the senatorship to Giovanni Colonna, and made his son Stefano—Petrarch's friend of forty years later—Count of the Romagna. When Nicholas died in April, 1292, the power of this Roman house, which had two cardinals out of twelve in the Conclave, seemed at its height.

For more than two years (1292–1294) the cardinals failed to agree upon a successor; but at length, by a sudden impulse, they called to the throne Pietro Morrone, an old hermit near Sulmona, who took the name of Celestine V. But his incapacity was such that in a few months he "made the great refusal," [1] stripped himself of his robes, and returned to his cell, till he was seized and incarcerated by his successor. In the ensuing Conclave at Naples Cardinal Benedetto Gaetani, by lavish promises to the King and even—so his enemies said—by downright bribery, secured his own election within a few days (December 24, 1294). He was an old man of seventy-seven years, but in learning and ability he was a complete contrast to Celestine; and his pride, cruelty,

[1] Dante, *Inferno*, III. 60.

rapacity and craft made his name a byword in his own and in later times. On January 23, 1295, he made his solemn entry into Rome in full pontifical vestments, riding a snow-white palfrey, whose bridle was held on one side by the King of Naples and on the other by the latter's son, Charles "Martel," the (titular) King of Hungary, clad in scarlet. At the banquet which followed, these monarchs brought the first dishes to the Pope's table, and then seated themselves in a humble position among the cardinals. It was a strange scene, marking the supremacy of the Popes over the lesser powers of this world; but it was never to be repeated in the sense in which Boniface VIII. —such was the new Pope's title—had understood it.

The zenith of the mediæval Papacy, as regards its pretensions at least, was reached in his pontificate (1294–1303); the climax of that pontificate was the year of Jubilee (1300), when two millions of Christians flocked at his invitation to the shrines of the Apostles to obtain by this pilgrimage a plenary indulgence from all personal penalties for their sins. Among the pilgrims were the historian Giovanni Villani of Florence, and probably also another Florentine far greater than he, in whose immortal poem—the ripest product of the Middle Ages—we have striking reminiscences [1] of this memorable year.

In the first "lustrum" of his reign Boniface had made many enemies by his meddlesome and autocratic policy. Yet at the moment all these enemies, except Frederick, King of Sicily, had been subdued or silenced. The heart of the most humble-minded Pope might have swelled with triumph at the throngs which daily besieged the churches—even the poorest leaving some offering to swell his coffers.[2] But Boniface was not humble-minded; and he would doubtless regard neither pilgrims nor offerings without a sense of their importance to his personal aims. In one respect he was disappointed. It was his special purpose to abase the pride of kings; and no king—except Carobert of

[1] Dante, *Inf.* XVIII. 28–33; *Purg.* II. 98; *Par.* XXXI. 31–36. The scenes which he then saw may have inspired him to date his vision at the Easter of the Jubilee year, though some have supposed, for astronomical reasons, that it should be dated a year later. See *Dante and the Early Astronomers*, by M. A. Orr (Mrs. John Evershed), pp. 409–424.

[2] The chronicler of Asti says that he saw two clerics standing day and night at the altar of St. Paul's, and gathering in with rakes the pilgrims' coins which amounted to an untold sum. But these were probably of small value.

Hungary, a mere boy, whose title was his own creation—mingled with the crowd of suppliants.

Looking back on his five years of power, Boniface might fancy that he had laid the foundations of an all-powerful Papacy. In one of the Jubilee processions he is said to have appeared in the Imperial habit with triple crown and sceptre, and to have had "the two swords" carried in front of him—a token of his absolute supremacy, temporal as well as spiritual, over mankind. A short time before, when envoys came to protest against his haughty treatment of the newly elected Emperor, Albert of Austria, the Pope received them sitting upon a throne with a sword in his hand, and burst out, in reply to their complaints: "It is I who am the Emperor!" He had denounced Albert as a rebel and as the murderer of his predecessor Adolf, and had refused him absolution; but the real grievance was that Albert had concluded an alliance, matrimonial and political, with Philip, King of France. The first mutterings of the storm in his relations with the latter monarch had been heard four years before on the question of the taxation of the French clergy. But Boniface had shown tact enough to moderate the claims made in his Bull "*Clericis Laicos*"; and he was consequently chosen —not as Pope, but as Benedetto Gaetani—to arbitrate in the quarrel between Philip and Edward I. In publishing his decision, however, he had seen fit to ignore the above curious distinction; and the province of Guienne, which Philip had conquered from Edward, he still held in his hands as arbiter. In Rome he had crushed the Colonna family by whom his authority had been challenged, had captured their towers and fortresses, razed Palestrina to the ground and forced them to flee as exiles to foreign courts (1297). By such unexampled vengeance he had alienated the Ghibellines throughout Italy; but at present there seemed to be no leader to uplift their trampled standard. He had imposed Carobert, the grandson and heir of Charles the Lame, upon unwilling Hungary as its king, and although his attempt to reunite Sicily with Naples had so far failed, he was hopeful of eventual success. And yet, though he knew it not, he stood on the verge of an abyss. In spite of all the incense of the Jubilee, he was trusted by none; and he had incurred the most bitter hatred in powerful quarters. The times had changed since Gregory and Innocent had imposed their will upon the greatest of princes;

and he, whose pretensions had risen even higher, was to find that he must reckon with new forces that he could neither bend nor break.

Meanwhile his mind was revolving lofty schemes for the exaltation of his office and the enrichment of his family. He dreamed of the restoration of the Latin Empire of the East—perhaps of its union with the Western Empire in the person of some submissive son of the Church. He had his eye on the vast wealth of Florence, which city he called "the Fifth Element" from the subtle way in which it pervaded the European system; and he hoped to round off the Papal Kingdom by subjecting Tuscany to its sway. But first of all the rebellion of Sicily must be put down, and its young king, Frederick of Aragon, taught to rue his opposition to the Holy See. Boniface had already excluded all Sicilians, as well as his enemies the Colonna, from the Jubilee Indulgence; and it may be conjectured that he was out of humour with the King of Naples for his failure to re-establish his authority in Sicily. Still, the step which he now took shows an extraordinary blindness to his own interests and to the storm which was even then brewing in the north. Towards the end of 1300 he invited Charles of Valois, brother of the French King, to bring a force of French knights, and undertake the subjugation of Sicily. He held out illusive hopes of making him Emperor of the East; but it is hardly credible that he promised to depose Albert of Austria and procure the election of Charles in the West. Such an arrangement would have enormously increased the power of France, and he cannot have believed that the German Electors would consent to it. But it was the weakness of Boniface's diplomacy that he never seemed to see beyond the immediate consequences of his own acts.

The offer was eagerly accepted; and in the following summer (1301) Charles, tempted with the posts of Senator of Rome and Captain-General of the Papal States, passed the Alps with 500 knights and met the Pope and the King of Naples at Anagni. He doubtless promised help in Sicily; but the Pope first entrusted him with the pressing task of composing the disturbed state of Florence, appointing him for that purpose Mediator of Tuscany. It will be convenient to postpone for a while the story of his utter failure in that capacity, in which five months were fruitlessly wasted. In the spring of 1302 he turned southward and

attempted with a powerful fleet to subdue the Sicilian "rebels." But their young and capable King declined battle both on land and sea, while with an inferior fleet he seriously interrupted communications with the peninsula. These checks, and an outbreak of disease in the invading force, induced the Valois to conclude a treaty with Frederick at Caltabellota (August 31), under which the latter was to remain for his life king of the island (to revert afterwards to Naples) and was at once to marry Leonora, daughter of Charles the Lame. This treaty was submitted to the Pope as suzerain; but since it was entirely against his policy, he refused to consider it as more than provisional. History does not relate whether Charles of Valois sought an interview with Boniface on his return through Italy. If he did, the quarrel of the Pope with France, which was then at its height, must have made the position delicate for both sides. By this time Boniface must have realized his deplorable error in inviting the intervention of Charles. The measure had been resented by the Ghibellines throughout Italy; and the prince's cynical disregard of the interests of his employer had produced nothing but discord and defeat. As Villani well puts it: "He came to bring peace to Tuscany, and" (as we shall soon see) "he brought war; he went to Sicily to wage war and concluded a shameful peace."

III. The Papacy and France

At the time of the Jubilee there was no open breach between Boniface and Philip the Fair, but there was probably much secret ill-will. The King was dissatisfied with the Pope's award in the dispute between France and England; and there were many minor matters in which his own arbitrary temper had embroiled him with his superior clergy. The Pope, with inconceivable want of tact, chose one of the most turbulent of these—the Bishop of Pamiers—to be the bearer, as his Nuncio, of various complaints to the King; and on the bishop's return to his diocese, before he could report to Rome, he was summoned before the King on a charge of treason, and consigned under arrest to the custody of his metropolitan. The seizure of a Papal Nuncio, although a French subject, was perhaps without precedent; and Philip dispatched his Chancellor, Peter Flotte, to explain his proceedings at Rome and to demand that the bishop should be

degraded and condemned. When Boniface asserted his absolute superiority over the secular power, the envoy replied with equal assurance: "Your power in temporal affairs is a power *in word*, that of the King my master a power *in deed*."

Such language from such a quarter should have made Boniface pause; for it betokened the rise of a new influence—that of the Lawyers, who, resting on the civil (*i.e.* the Roman) rather than on the canon law, were devoting themselves to the assertion of the King's prerogative. As Milman well expresses it:

"The hierarchy found, almost suddenly—instead of a cowering superstitious people, awed by their superior learning, trembling at the fulminations of their authority—a grave intellectual aristocracy, equal to themselves in profound erudition, resting on ancient written authority . . . of which they were perfect masters, opposing to the canons of the Church canons at least of greater antiquity." [1]

And this danger was the more threatening to the Pope in that it appeared first in France. For ages the sovereigns of that country had been devoted henchmen of the Papacy; and their power had recently been much enhanced in Italy by the action of former Popes, directed especially against the Empire. In the latter contest, with France's help, the Papacy had triumphed; but the true reason of its victory was the Italian dislike of the Emperor's effective supremacy, whatever lip-service might still be paid to his feudal rights. The present was a very different struggle; for the Holy See found itself confronted by the pride of a national monarchy, which set the laws of the State in array against the laws of the Church.

Had Boniface been inclined to temporize, to turn a deaf ear to the provocations of the King, the contest might have been postponed for a while; but it was not in his nature to yield an inch. He made the Archdeacon of Narbonne the bearer of several Bulls, in one of which he summoned the chief representatives of the French clergy to a council in Rome on November 1, 1302, to consider the encroachments of the King on the rights of the Church. The effect of this summons would be to set up a conspiracy of the French clergy against their King; and it is not surprising that Philip sternly forbade them, on pain of the loss of their temporalities, to journey to Rome. But there were

[1] *Latin Christianity* (ed. 1872), VII. p. 42.

other Bulls among the number which excited still greater indignation. The one beginning "*Ausculta, fili*" asserted the Pope's absolute power over kings and kingdoms, and warned Philip to dismiss the evil counsellors who had deluded him with the idea that he had no superior. Nothing could be more unwise than such language at such a time to the feudal head of a feudal state. The Pope's notion of spiritual supremacy necessarily comprehended both worlds, temporal and spiritual, for the one was, *ex hypothesi*, superior to the other; but the King's party naturally raised the cry that Boniface was claiming to treat France as a vassal state.

The public temper was kept at fever heat by the publication of another Bull, couched in the most curt and rude terms, which Boniface complained was forged by his enemies, and to which Philip replied in terms still curter and ruder. One of these Bulls—perhaps the genuine one—was publicly burned before Nôtre Dame on February 11, 1302, in Philip's presence, and its destruction proclaimed to the people by sound of trumpet. The States-General were assembled on April 10, and indignantly condemned the Pope's project of discussing the temporal grievances of French subjects in a council at Rome. The clergy, in an address to the Pope, explained that they had been compelled by necessity to subscribe to this complaint, and that the outcry against their order was so great as to threaten the dissolution of Church and State. It was the first instance in the later Middle Ages of the clergy of a continental country taking side against the Pope. To the lay estates the cardinals replied in dignified terms, that the Pope had never claimed a temporal sovereignty over them. The Pope, in a personal reply to the bishops and clergy, rather spoiled the effect of this disclaimer by stating that those who denied the subjection of temporal to spiritual were asserting two co-equal principles, like the Manichean heretics.

In July of this year (1302) the French army suffered a disastrous defeat at Courtrai in Flanders, in which 7000 of the flower of the nobility and commons (including Peter Flotte) were slain. The Pope seems to have supposed that what he doubtless regarded as a Divine judgment upon the King's crimes would render him more compliant; but the expectation was disappointed. On November 1 the Roman council was held, and was attended by some at least of the French clergy. It was

followed by the issue of the famous Bull "*Unam Sanctam*"—no doubt prepared some months before—which closes with the pronouncement that "it is necessary to salvation that every human being should be subject to the Pontiff of Rome." The novelty of this Bull, which marks an epoch in the history of the Papacy, is that the claims of former Popes—in some cases quite as lofty—are here crystallized into a necessary article of faith. The Pope exalts himself to the position of a theocratic umpire, who, because of his supposed supremacy in all matters of faith and morals, is bound to correct all acts, even in the temporal sphere, which are, or may be, stained by sin. The theory may be impregnable on Papal principles; but the true test of a theory is practice, and that was the rock on which the vessel split. Men could see then—as they could not see a century earlier—that such authority could not be wielded by one who was himself a sinner and swayed by worldly motives. In Italy the respect for the Papacy had long been far less than in other countries, because it was too familiar and was viewed from too short a distance; henceforward, from the failure of its extreme pretensions, other nations began to have a juster estimate of its power.

Early in 1303 a cardinal legate [1] arrived in France, bearing twelve articles of complaint against the King, to which Philip sent evasive and, in the Pope's view, unsatisfactory replies. Before the matter could be carried further, Philip convoked a Parliament at Nôtre Dame (March 12) at which Boniface was arraigned by the Lawyers as no lawful Pope, but a heretic and a man of scandalous morals; while at the States-General on June 13 an appeal was solemnly made from his decisions to a General Council. To this measure Philip obtained the adhesion of at least 700 clergy and Church corporations. Meanwhile, before hearing of these proceedings, Boniface dispatched messengers to the Cardinal with alternative Bulls to be used according to circumstances—one (for use only in the last resort) declaring Philip to be under the ban and excommunicate. There was a certain "smartness" in this method of procedure, but unfortunately the messengers could not keep their secret; they were arrested and their dispatches seized, and the Cardinal had no resource but to leave the country.

At this moment (April, 1303) the policy of Boniface had

[1] John Le Moine, Cardinal of St. Marcellinus and St. Peter.

arrayed against him the general sentiment, if not the open enmity, of the entire western world, if we except the King of Naples, whose support he was accused of having bought by a secret treaty in order to obtain the tiara. It was full time for him to look round and see if, by judicious concession, he could gain allies for the impending struggle among those whom he had estranged. Hitherto he had stiffly refused all recognition of the election of Albert of Austria to the Empire on the ground that he had " murdered " his predecessor Adolf, although the latter had been slain in battle. Now the Pope suddenly discovered that " the suppliant sinner " [1] deserved pity rather than justice and might be declared worthy of the Roman crown. He wrote to the Electors commanding them to render allegiance to Albert; and the latter, forsaking the alliance he had recently made with France, issued a golden Bull in July, in which he acknowledged, with grovelling eagerness, the dependence of the Empire upon the Papacy, and swore to protect the Pope's sacred person against all his enemies. No wonder that Dante, if he knew the terms of this Nuremberg decree, could scarcely restrain his scorn in the *Commedia* at the bare mention of the name of " Albert the German." [2] This abject submission of the Empire could only have the effect of hardening the resolution of Boniface against lesser potentates, who resisted his will.

But in spite of Imperial support, his position in Italy was far less secure than he imagined. He might feel sure of the French interest at Naples, because he had rendered important services to King Charles, who would not run the risk of having these arrangements upset. Boniface had bestowed the kingdom of Hungary—which, as usual, was claimed as a " Papal fief "—upon Carobert, the grandson of Charles; and although many Hungarians still resisted the decision, the steady support of the Holy See finally prevailed. But Carobert was also heir in the direct line to the kingdom of Naples; and Charles was wise enough to see that two kingdoms so far apart and so diverse in character should not be united under one sovereign. He had, therefore, with the Pope's consent, privately nominated his

[1] So he is called by Gregorovius, paraphrasing the exalted language of the Bull of April 30, 1303, *History of the City of Rome* (English translation by Mrs. Hamilton), Vol. V. p. 577.

[2] *Purg.* VI. 97–117.

third son, Robert,[1] as his heir in Naples; and if the authority of Boniface should be questioned or destroyed, the affairs of both kingdoms would be thrown into confusion. An opportunity to settle the Sicilian question by the terms of the treaty of Caltabellota had been offered to the Pope many months before, but he could not bring his pride to the sticking point. Now, however, he was content to confirm that treaty on condition that Frederick paid tribute to him as suzerain and that he took the title of King of Trinacria. The first condition was never observed, and probably not the second; but this absurd adoption of an obsolete name [2] was imposed because a Pope had already crowned Charles as King of Sicily.

Boniface had probably deceived himself as to the strength of his position in Italy. During the summer heats he retired to Anagni, his native city—forty miles from Rome—where he held a consistory, in which he purged himself by oath from the charge of heresy. He then issued a Bull (August 18), stigmatizing as absurd the appeal of Philip to a Council, and ascribing the more personal charges against himself to the malice of his enemy, Stefano Colonna, now at Paris. Yet in that very month the toils were slowly gathering round him. Philip had stooped to a manœuvre from which the old Imperial foes of the Popes would have recoiled. For some weeks William of Nogaret and Sciarra Colonna had been in Italy, on the Tuscan border near Siena; and if Boniface did not know that they had with them some troops of horse—used only the previous year at his own behest for the reduction of Sicily—he must have been surrounded by traitors. The object of the plot was to seize the person of the Pope and take him by force to Lyons to await the assembling of the Council. It was also well known that he was about to issue a Bull deposing Philip from his throne and declaring him excommunicate. French gold was employed to obtain supporters in Italy; and though it failed with the King of Naples and the Roman nobles, it was widely successful among the barons of the Campagna and throughout the Papal States. There was a reason for this in the shameful nepotism of Boniface. By the expenditure of an enormous

[1] His eldest son, Charles Martel (father of Carobert), had died in 1295; the second son, Louis, had taken the ecclesiastical habit and was already an Archbishop.

[2] Probably it was never more than a literary name, adopted by the Roman poets from the Greek commentators on Homer.

sum [1]—taken, so men said, from the treasures hoarded by the Church for a crusade—he had purchased a large principality in Rome and Latium for his nephew, Count Peter Gaetani, and his sons. Such conduct aroused both suspicion and envy; and even the city of Anagni, to which he had granted many favours, was false to him from dread of inclusion in the Gaetani possessions. Some of the cardinals (especially Napoleon Orsini) and members of the Pope's own household were privy to the plot; and if the cities of Tuscany held aloof, it was from no good will to the Pope, but because they were fully occupied with their own quarrels.

There is no need to repeat at length the oft-told tale of the Pope's humiliation and capture—how, with the help of a party in the city, his palace was stormed and sacked on September 7; how, throned and crowned, he faced his enemies with dauntless mien, and offered his neck to the sword; and how, imprisoned for three days, he refused all concessions and all food (for fear of poison) until the citizens, in a fit of passionate repentance, liberated him and drove out his captors. Such an outrage upon an old man of eighty-six almost compels oblivion of the infatuated arrogance which had brought about so terrible a fall. The Pope was conducted to Rome by a relieving force of the Orsini, and received with apparent respect. But when he entered the Vatican, he knew that he was a prisoner in their hands; his letters to the King of Naples and others were intercepted; and within a month (October 11) he was dead—not, as his enemies hinted, by suicide, but from the torments of rage and suspicion, preying upon a frame exhausted and a mind unhinged.

Boniface had few friends in his own day, though in modern times he has not lacked defenders. Very soon the mordant epigram—which might have served as his epitaph—obtained universal currency, that "he came in like a fox, he ruled like a lion, he died like a dog." The considered judgment of posterity will perhaps be that of a friend of Petrarch [2] towards the end of the century, who calls him "the great-hearted sinner." That is to say, he had an iron will and supreme ambition, which were darkened by ingrained defects of character. His contemporaries, if they could have respected him as a man, might have forgiven

[1] Equal to £1,000,000 sterling in our present money. See Gregorovius, Vol. V. p. 584.

[2] Benvenuto Rambaldi da Imola.

or ignored his fantastic claims as Pontiff ; and even his enemies compassionated him in his fall. Thus Dante, though having strong personal reasons for disliking him, and though placing him (by anticipation) among the simoniacs in Hell, strongly condemns the outrage of which he was the victim.[1] It has been necessary, in an account of the fourteenth century, to describe his career, because of the tremendous results, both near and remote, of his fall. From this flowed by natural sequence the " seventy years' captivity " at Avignon, the Great Schism in the West with its accompanying Councils and, after an interval, the upheaval of the Reformation.

The measure of the fall of the Papacy from its proud pretensions may be seen in the conduct of the next Pope. Acting with promptitude in order to avoid the appearance of constraint—for the King of Naples was already in Rome with an armed force—the Conclave met at once, and within a fortnight (October 22, 1303) elected the Dominican cardinal Niccolo Boccasini, who took the name of Benedict XI. He was a prelate of mild and peaceable character, who had witnessed the outrage at Anagni and must have realized the necessity for a retreat. His own position was pitiful enough. Several of the Roman cardinals—notably one of the Orsini, Matteo Rosso, who was the " doyen " of the Sacred College—had more influence than the new Pope, and were suspected of a scheme to subject him to the tutelage of the Roman aristocracy. Benedict at once caused it to be known in Paris that the censures of Boniface would be revoked ; and he issued Bulls from Rome in April and May, 1304, withdrawing all the penalties laid by his predecessor upon the realm of France, its clergy and officials, William of Nogaret alone excepted. He might well be uneasy, however, at the vindictive persistence with which Philip pursued his appeal for a General Council in order to invalidate the acts of Boniface. Each cardinal was separately sounded as to his views on this point ; and though the majority reserved their decision, a respectable number gave their adhesion to the Council. Meanwhile Benedict, amidst the quarrels threatened by the return of the Colonna (whom, with the exception of Sciarra, he had been obliged to pardon) found his position in Rome insupportable ; and despite the opposition of some of the cardinals, he retired first to Viterbo,

[1] *Inf.* XIX. 52–57 ; *Purg.* XX. 86–92.

and then to Perugia. It is most improbable that he intended his absence to be permanent,[1] or that he contemplated the establishment of the Curia in Lombardy. His new residence was in his own States, and many of his immediate predecessors, as we have shown, had found Rome little to their taste. From Perugia, on June 7, he issued a stern Bull against the authors of the Anagni outrage; and within a few weeks (the exact date is uncertain) he was dead. It was widely believed in his own day that, at the instance of Philip, poison had been inserted into a basket of fresh figs brought to him as a present. Such rumours were universal in those days when prominent personages were suddenly removed; and since Benedict's attack of dysentery lasted more than a week, the verdict should certainly be one of "not proven."

IV. The Northern Republics

The northern part of Italy—if we understand by that term the Roman districts of Cisalpine Gaul, Liguria and Venetia—can never have been regarded by the Popes as a possible place of residence. It was too near to the German frontier; and though its free cities had welcomed the help of the Church against the Empire, they would have been in no mood to accept a Papal overlordship. It is true that their love of freedom and independence had waned considerably since the days of Barbarossa; but while they might suffer patiently the lordship (or "tyranny" in the Greek sense) of some prominent family among themselves, they were still jealous of foreign interference and of the encroachments of their immediate neighbours. Such encroachments, however, were constantly taking place in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, whenever any ruling family became strong enough to aim at extending its power. During those centuries the boundaries of these northern states were so shifting and their politics so kaleidoscopic, that it is not easy to obtain a clear general view. But we might separate the region under consideration into three main divisions: 1. Savoy and Piedmont, with the adjacent marquisates of Montferrat, Saluzzo, Ceva and others; 2. the maritime republics; 3. the inland republics.

[1] As Christophe (*op. cit.* Vol. I. p. 156) supposes.

1. The Imperial rule was by no means extinct in this division, although it had been much weakened by the long interregnum (1254–1273). As we shall see, the Count of Savoy supported Henry of Luxemburg on his march to Rome; and yet city-states, like Asti, were wavering in their allegiance. But a large part of the territory acknowledged the overlordship of the French King of Naples, being influenced by the proximity of his hereditary county of Provence; this especially applies to the marquisates mentioned above, which had taken the Guelf side in the war of Charles of Anjou. These possessions, though often threatened by the power of Milan, gave the House of Anjou an insecure foothold in Northern Italy, and were of great importance, both formerly to Charles and subsequently to his grandson Robert, in their attempts to gain a predominant position in the peninsula.

2. The maritime republics, if we except Pisa as belonging to Tuscany, were Venice and Genoa. At this time Venice, though one of the richest cities of Italy, took scarcely any part in Italian politics, except sometimes as mediator between contending inland states. Confined within the limits of the lagoon, her gaze seemed fixed on the East, where she played the leading rôle in commerce till after the middle of the thirteenth century. From that date, although her commerce was still supreme in Egypt and Syria, her star paled in Eastern Europe as compared with that of Genoa. In the last decade of the century her fleet sustained two severe reverses at the hands of her rival; and in 1299 she was excluded from the Black Sea and the Ægean by the terms of a treaty of peace. But in spite of this disaster and of the Papal veto against trade with Islam—which she studiously ignored—her wealth and power were scarcely affected; and her individual activity surpassed that of other cities, even of Florence. Her manufactures included silk, glass, mosaic and the finest specimens of metal work. Her strength was in great part due to the stability of her oligarchic constitution, and also to her aloofness from the factions of the mainland. Her Guelf neighbours were apt to call her citizens Ghibellines; but the truth rather is that they were strictly neutral,[1] until the Guelf cry was raised in the conspiracy under Tiepolo (1310), and then it was promptly suppressed.

Genoa, on the other hand, less protected by her situation from

[1] Hallam, *Middle Ages*, Vol. I. p. 461.

interference from without, often wavered between the two factions. She possessed four leading families, of which two, the Fieschi and the Grimaldi, were Guelf, while the others, the Spinola and the Doria, were Ghibelline. It may have been through a kind of equipoise which thus resulted in the power of the noble families that none of them succeeded in establishing a lordship over the city. But this very equality of force, combined with the democratic spirit of the people, was the cause of constant revolutions in the government. If there were no disturbances so serious as occurred in contemporary Florence, the explanation may be that the possession of many external factories and settlements produced a stronger foreign policy and a saner public spirit. The period of the Crusades, which was just closing, had brought more riches to Genoa than to any other Italian city. She alone of Italian states had contracted to furnish transport for the armies of the faithful; and her artisans were specially skilled in the manufacture of arms and munitions of war. Yet her very wealth was a source of danger, as it attracted the jealous envy of powerful neighbours. At the opening of the fourteenth century Venice and Genoa exceeded even Florence in material splendour and were the most luxurious cities of the western world.

3. In the inland Lombard republics the cause of liberty had seriously declined since the crisis of the struggle between the Papacy and the Empire. At that time, according to Hallam, they might be divided into two groups: First, that of Central Lombardy, comprising Milan with her quasi-dependencies of Lodi, Pavia, Brescia and Piacenza, and also Bergamo, Alessandria, Mantua, Parma and Cremona; and secondly that of the March of Verona, including Padua, Vicenza, Treviso and Verona. To these may be added a third group mainly composed of the cities of the Romagna, which, though now nominally subject to the Pope, retained a large measure of independence; the chief cities of this group were Bologna, Ferrara, Modena (not in Romagna), Faenza and Imola. Of these groups the first and last were in the heat of the contest predominantly Guelf, except Parma and Cremona; the Veronese group, though containing a considerable Guelf party, was drawn to the other side by powerful Ghibelline nobles, such as Ezzelin da Romano. By the year 1300 the Imperial cause might be regarded as finally lost; but

the spirit of faction maintained the old party cries, although they had now lost their meaning. The cities might still call themselves Guelf or Ghibelline according to ancient habit, but without any reference to Imperial prerogative.

In speaking of groups, however, we must not be understood to mean that the states in each group were accustomed to act in concert. There was an utter want of cohesion between them; and the various "leagues" which were formed from time to time were even more easily dissolved than the ascendancy of one family in a single state. Sismondi [1] compares the student of this period to a bewildered spectator viewing from some lofty height a vast and motley crowd incessantly in motion, the component parts of which seem to be for ever mixing and disentangling themselves in different proportions. As we shall see in Florence, a small local or family feud might rapidly split up a great party into discordant fragments; and victory too often inclined not to the most disinterested section, but to that which had gained the support of some external power. Under the pretext of restoring peace the meddlesome Papacy was frequently the fomenter of worse discord—all the more when its action was dictated by selfish aims.

One potent cause of strife was the imperfect assimilation of the two chief elements of these city-states, the nobles and the burghers. Laws were passed to compel the neighbouring nobles to become citizens and to spend a certain time within the walls; but the only result was to transfer the feuds of the *contado*, or countryside, to the more electrical atmosphere of the market-place. In this way families of greater wealth or power gained an undue preponderance in the government; until the citizens, weary of anarchy, placed the "lordship" of the republic in the hands of a single noble, whether for a year or for a longer term. This was usually the origin of the "tyrannies" in the Italian states; the "tyrant" received a fixed stipend, and was supposed to be a mandatory of the people and to govern only for their advantage. He might often be succeeded by his son or by a near relative; but at the time we are considering hereditary right was seldom recognized. He might have ousted another family little less powerful than his own; and his worst foes were often those of his own household. If he had attained power by courting and flattering the mob, his rule might turn out to be

[1] Sismondi, *Histoire des Republiques Italiennes*, III. 191, 192.

more despotic; for he became jealous of every neighbour, and often specially cruel to relatives, who had gained a reflected glory by mere connection with himself. It was the perpetual quarrelling of these city-lords which aroused the passionate scorn of Dante, and, after him, of Petrarch, although the latter was content to be the petted favourite of some, who knew how to treat him with respect. Both poets cried aloud for a supreme Deliverer, who should teach these princelets their proper place and should weld distracted Italy into one splendid state. It is scarcely surprising that, holding their views of the continuity of the Holy Empire with its world-conquering predecessor, they should both look for this Deliverer from beyond the Alps.

Milan was by far the most powerful of the Lombard republics. In the middle of the thirteenth century it was governed by the Guelf family of Della Torre; but in 1277 the Archbishop Otto Visconti, whom they had excluded from his see for fifteen years, overcame their forces and obtained the lordship. This revolution restored the Ghibellines to Milan; and Matteo Visconti, the great-nephew and successor of Otto, was a prudent and far-sighted ruler, who in 1294 was made by Adolf of Nassau Imperial vicar in Lombardy. He strengthened his position by matrimonial alliances, marrying in 1300 his son Galeazzo to the daughter of the Marquis d'Este at Ferrara, and his daughter to the son of Alberto della Scala, lord of Verona. It is said that he had promised the hand of this princess to Alberto Scotto, lord of Piacenza, and that the latter, in revenge for his disappointment, formed against him a Guelf league of the lesser tyrants of Lombardy, including those of Como, Pavia, Crema, Cremona, Novara and Vercelli, with the Marquis of Montferrat. The confederates were joined by the long-exiled Torriani of Milan; and in 1302 Matteo Visconti found himself outnumbered and the city behind him ripe for rebellion. When his son Galeazzo, whom he had left in charge of Milan, was expelled by the citizens, Matteo bowed to the storm, accepted the sentence of exile and retired to his castle of San Colombano, which fifty years later was to be for a time the residence of Petrarch.

The ambitious Scotto, whose Guelf principles were but skin-deep, was disowned by his confederates the following year (1303) and promptly opened negotiations with the Visconti, and with the lords of Mantua and Verona. In 1304 he was attacked by

the league ; and the only succour which he could obtain in time was from Ghiberto da Correggio, who had had himself proclaimed lord of Parma in the previous year. This " mushroom tyrant " has a special interest for our subject, since he was the father of one of Petrarch's intimate friends. His conduct on the occasion illustrates the treacherous character of these Italian despots. Entering Piacenza with 2000 soldiers and finding the city threatened from without and in revolt against Scotto's lordship, he advised his friend to place himself and his family in safety ; and as soon as his back was turned, Ghiberto tried to use his own troops to obtain the lordship for himself, but was driven out by a popular rising. The same year witnessed minor revolutions of the same character at Asti and Bergamo. These " storms in a teacup," though they might mean exile to a few prominent burghers, were generally bloodless, and scarcely affected the life of the ordinary citizen.

V. Florence and the Tuscan Republics

The communes of Tuscany formed a fourth group of the Italian republics ; and of these the most prominent were Florence, Pistoia, Pisa, Arezzo, Siena and Lucca. Of this group in the year 1300, Florence and Pistoia had for nearly forty years been uninterruptedly Guelf ; Pisa and Arezzo had been almost as continuously Ghibelline ; while Siena and Lucca frequently oscillated from the one party to the other. Among these six states Florence, from its size and wealth rather than from its military power, was predominant ; and the coming of Charles of Anjou (1265), while it brought many evils to the rest of Italy, enormously extended the commerce of Florence through her acceptance of the prince as Imperial vicar.[1] In the ensuing thirty years Florence consolidated her position by successful wars against Arezzo and Pisa, which culminated in the defeat of Arezzo at Campaldino (1289), and the acceptance by Pisa of humiliating terms of peace (1293). The latter result was achieved in concert with Genoa, who had reduced her maritime rival to the direst straits after the naval victory at Meloria (1284). But with the development of Florentine commerce, it was essential

[1] He was appointed not by the Emperor, but by the Pope during the interregnum (1254–1273).

either to be on good terms with Pisa—the natural harbour of export for her goods—or to conquer her and hold her in thrall. The first alternative was difficult through the age-long hatred between the two cities; the second was perhaps too stiff a task for the military power of the Guelf city. It might, however, have been attempted, but for the serious internal state of Florence at the time when peace was concluded.

Only the year before (1292) had been passed, at the instance of Giano della Bella, the reform called "The Enactments of Justice," by which the nobles (grandi) were excluded from all share in the government—henceforth to be confined to members of the Greater Guilds. These trade societies, composed of wealthy merchants, had long been established in Florence; but with the attainment of her commercial eminence, they rose to greater power and monopolized the administration. They were seven in number, from each of which (except that of the Judges and Notaries) and from each "Sesto" or sixth division of the city had been chosen (since 1282) the six Priors of the "Arti" (or Guilds) who held office for two months, and, with the Gonfalonier of Justice—now for the first time added—constituted the executive government (Signoria). The six greater guilds were those of the Clothiers (Calimala), the Wool-Merchants, the Silk-Manufacturers, the Money-changers, the Physicians and the Furriers; there were also fourteen lesser guilds, whose share in the government was less direct. The main object of this latest reform of the constitution was to curb the power of the nobles, who had hitherto been able, by undue influence, to screen members of their order from punishment. Its immediate effect was the perpetual exclusion of thirty-three great families—a number subsequently increased to seventy-two—from the government. The author of this measure, a well-meaning but impulsive man, was compelled by faction to withdraw into exile in 1295; but his reform stood, although it failed to bring permanent peace. The problem was a peculiarly difficult one; but it was surely unjust to punish a whole order for the turbulence of a few, and to visit the sins of an individual upon his latest posterity.

All citizens who were not nobles (grandi) were styled "popolani"; the latter were subdivided into the rich merchants ("popolo grasso") and the plebeians ("popolo minuto") comprising all shades of the poot. The sympathies of the plebeians

were a shifting and uncertain quantity. A large majority of them had been enthusiastic for the reforms of Giano; but subsequently many of them turned against him through the influence of the nobles, who were valuable customers of the small tradesmen, and his withdrawal from Florence was the natural result. Villani truly remarks that every man who became a leader of the people, or "the masses," in Florence was invariably deserted. Just then the nobles had managed to pack the Signory with their own friends, who procured some relaxation in the severity of the "Enactments." But the fickle populace soon veered round; the priors who had introduced the changes were stoned in the streets on quitting office; and in order to weaken and divide the nobles, some of the less factious aristocrats were proclaimed "popolani." [1]

It may seem strange that the nobles should have needed any further weakening. Yet even in the strictest democracies the influence of social distinctions survives the loss of political power. It may have been a necessary restriction at the time to compel the noble landowners of the *contado* to reside within the walls; but the provision opened the door to all kinds of undue influence. For a long time the chief magistrates—the Podestà and the Captain of the People—had been obliged by law to be foreigners in order to secure impartiality. But they were also bound to be knights—that is, nobles—and the "grandi" of Florence still had a share in their selection. Originally the Podestà had been virtually the head of the Republic; but at the beginning of the fourteenth century the office had declined in importance. Both the Podestà and the Captain had become ordinary judges; and being badly paid, they were open to bribery, especially from rich and noble suitors. As foreigners they ought certainly to have been impartial in composing civic feuds; but they were imperfectly acquainted with the laws of Florence and with the disorders at which these were aimed, and even when well disposed, they were led astray by designing persons. Moreover, although the nobles had been excluded from two of the three governing councils—the Council of the People and the Council of the Captain—they could still sit on the Council of the Podestà,

[1] Del Lungo, in his *Dino Compagni e la sua Cronaca* (I. p. 162), supposes that this was the time when Dante, who was of noble birth, became a "popolano" through joining the Guild of the Physicians.

which was a judicial assembly of representative men. The nobles were also consciously far superior to their commercial rulers in the art of war, and from their knightly rank were frequently chosen as ambassadors to neighbouring states. They still controlled the management of a powerful society (the " Parte Guelfa "), which had been formed about thirty years before to administer the revenues of confiscated Ghibelline property and to promote Guelf interests in Tuscany. In this Guelf Society, which could take measures against any suspected Ghibelline, the nobles held the chief offices ; and though they could not themselves be elected to the Signory, they possessed efficacious means of keeping out of it any declared enemies of their own order.

At that time all classes, except a few less prominent nobles, were at least nominally Guelf. But this seeming unanimity concealed a vast number of cross divisions. As our English experience has taught us, fissiparous tendencies soon begin to develop in the ranks of a too powerful party ; and indeed the old labels of Guelf and Ghibelline had now ceased to have much meaning. During the last five years of the thirteenth century, there was an increasing, scarcely concealed discord between the various classes. The lowest class, in their Lesser Guilds, were jealous of the rich merchants and inclined to truckle to the nobility, but they were without a leader. If the nobles had been united, they might have been able, despite their exclusion, to seize the government by a *coup de main*. But there was a deep division among them between an extreme and a moderate section —between those who had determined to abolish the " Enactments " and those who had finally renounced that aim. Among the latter were many who, like Dante, had been declared " popolani " and were therefore eligible to the Signory ; and these would naturally be considered traitors by their old associates.

At this crisis two families, and eventually two men, took the lead of these opposite parties—the Donati of the extreme, the Cerchi of the moderate faction. The Donati were aristocrats of feudal descent, but of no great wealth. Corso, the most prominent member, was a shrewd, ambitious man of such haughty manners that as he rode his black horse through the city he seemed, in the words of his opponent Compagni, as if " the whole earth belonged to him." The plebeians gave him the nickname of " The Baron," and loudly cheered his equestrian pomp, some

perhaps satirically. Among the nobles who most hated him were the Cavalcanti, suspected of Ghibelline leanings; and the graceful poet Guido of that family could scarcely pass him in the street without a brawl. The moderate party was led by the Cerchi, a family of no social standing; but their leader, Vieri, was one of the richest merchants of the city and a prominent "popolano." Perhaps his position forced him to be a party man, but in ability he was inferior to his opponent.

Such was the state of parties at the beginning of the year 1300. Florence was like a powder-magazine, in which the smallest spark of a family quarrel might at any moment produce an explosion. It was not long before the spark fell; but meanwhile we must mention an external source of trouble which aggravated, though it did not produce,[1] the discord. The Apennine city of Pistoia, twenty miles north-west of Florence, was a republic in which party and family feuds reached heights scarcely conceivable.[2] The town, like Florence, had been for some time wholly Guelf; but the ruling family of Cancellieri was divided into two branches, styled "Bianchi" and "Neri," between which a deadly vendetta had lately arisen. It originated in a drunken brawl, which produced bloody outrages on both sides, until in despair the republic early in 1300 placed the lordship (or "balìa") of the place in the hands of Florence for three years. This measure did not imply any loss of independence, but merely the establishment of an external umpire between the warring parties. The Florentine commission acted with impartiality, dividing the executive equally between the factions and banishing the "irreconcileables" to Florence for a term of years. This sentence was a kind of honourable imprisonment; but it was of ill omen that the Pistoian Neri were consigned to the charge of the Frescobaldi, adherents of the Donati; while the Pistoian Bianchi were lodged with the Cerchi, to whom they were related.[3] Villani says that Florence thus became "infected

[1] J. A. Symonds (*Introduction to the Study of Dante*, p. 56) goes as far as to say that the division of the Guelfs into Bianchi and Neri at Florence was in its origin wholly unpolitical. This view gives an exaggerated weight to the Pistoian quarrel.

[2] Dante (*Inf.* XXIV. 124–126) speaks of Pistoia as a "den of noxious beasts"; and Petrarch, writing to a native a generation later (Sonnet 71), calls its citizens "perverse."

[3] Prof. Villari (*Florentine History*, p. 501) curiously reverses this arrangement, but Sismondi (t. III. 1829, p. 125) and Muratori (*Annali d'Italia, anno* 1300) give it as above.

with the Pistoian venom" ; but the incident was in no sense the cause, if it was even the occasion, of the quarrel which ensued. Prof. Villari asserts that before this the Cerchi themselves had been divided into "Whites" and "Blacks" ; but it seems not unlikely that each of the two divisions of the Guelf party took its name from the Pistoian faction, to which it had accorded hospitality.

The situation became more serious through the interference of an external power—Boniface VIII.—who, under the pretext of mediation, was pursuing personal aims that he dared not avow. Four years before he had threatened the city with an interdict if it recalled Giano della Bella, as was then proposed. He had thus already shown a bias in favour of the extreme party among the nobles ; and this was increased by secret intrigues of the Donati with the Spini, the Pope's Florentine bankers at Rome, who represented to Boniface that the Cerchi were merely Ghibellines in disguise. But the Pope's real object was to use the Donati as an instrument for suppressing popular liberties, in the hope that ultimately Florence, with the rest of Tuscany, might be absorbed in the Papal State.[1] The abounding prosperity of the republic and the ubiquity of her commercial agents had produced in other communes, especially in Rome, a warm admiration for her free constitution ; and Boniface, whose position in Rome—even after the exile of the Colonna—was none too secure, dreaded the spread of this democratic "taint," of which his Guelf principles, if he had any, should have made him the champion. A circumstance favourable to his plans was that Florence, in spite of Villani's boast of her 100,000 soldiers,[2] had no properly trained army, and, above all, no military leaders, except the nobles, who were the worst foes of her liberties. Yet her sway was continually threatened by the hostility of her Ghibelline neighbours, Pisa and Arezzo, against whom she might some day need the Pope's assistance. Her chief commerce was with Rome, with the Neapolitan Angevins and with France ; and it was to her interest to keep on good terms with all three, who had generally been mutual allies. This was the strength

[1] This can no longer be denied by the Pope's apologists, as it is proved by a contemporary document recently discovered.

[2] Villani (Bk. VIII., Chaps. II. and XXXIX.) says that there were 30,000 in the city and 70,000 in the territory.

of Boniface's position ; but it was balanced by a jealous love of liberty, which impelled the popular leaders to resist all interference from without.

The intrigues of Corso Donati at Rome could not long be concealed from his opponents, who were in power at Florence ; and three Florentine citizens at Rome connected with the Spini were accused of treasonable practices against the State and mulcted in heavy fines. This measure against his confederates roused the Pope's ire ; and he summoned the accusers to Rome to answer for their conduct, at the same time requesting Vieri de' Cerchi to come to Rome and be reconciled to Corso Donati. The invitation was politely declined, which excited the Pope's wrath still further, as it frustrated his plan for the enforced appeasement of the quarrel among the nobles.

At this juncture, during the Mayday festivities of 1300, an affray took place between the parties, in which blood was spilt ; and the councils issued a decree, empowering the Signory to restore the city to order and to provide against the dangers that impended " from without as well as from within." The Pope very unwisely took these words as a direct challenge to himself, and wrote a violent letter in which he threatened not only to place the city under an interdict, if they refused his mediation, but to damage their trade and property " in all parts of the world," and even to relieve their debtors from the duty of payment. Within a month of these angry threats he wrote to the Duke of Saxony that, being compelled by the disorders in Florence infecting his own State to reduce Tuscany to subjection, he desired this Imperial Elector to persuade Albert of Austria to resign his rights over Tuscany to the Holy See. This was a fairly large demand to make of a prince whom he had refused to recognize and had branded as a murderer, and we cannot suppose it was conceded. It is characteristic of Boniface that, even in asking this favour, he asserts his own power to act without any consent ; but such stooping on his part indicates plainly that what he desired was a permanent, and not a temporary, concession.

The captains of the Guelf Society at Florence, who were chiefly Neri, now besought the Pope to intervene ; and without waiting for any other invitation, he dispatched the Cardinal of Acquasparta as mediator. The legate was received with outward respect, but when he asked for authority to reform the

government (*i.e.* to be entrusted with the "balìa") he met with a flat refusal. The majority of the people were determined to have no tampering with the constitution in order to patch up a peace among the nobles, who were less formidable when divided. The legate professed his desire that each party should have an equal share in the government—a fair-seeming suggestion which was yet frankly impossible. On June 15 a new batch of six priors entered upon office, among whom was the poet Dante. They were at once confronted with fresh disturbances; for on St. John's Eve (June 23) the Consuls of the Guilds were going in procession to the saint's shrine, when they were assaulted and beaten by the Neri nobles. Such an outrage called for condign punishment; and within twenty-four hours the Signory exiled certain prominent nobles on both sides—the Bianchi to Sarzana, and the Neri, among whom was Corso Donati, to Castel della Pieve near Perugia. The former immediately obeyed, but the latter resisted, and endeavoured—it is said with the Cardinal's connivance—to procure armed help from Lucca, but without success, since the Signory sent word promptly to Lucca that they were prepared for defence. The people were so incensed against the legate for his alleged complicity that arrows were shot into his palace, and after changing his residence in alarm, he withdrew, leaving the city excommunicated and under an interdict. The riots, however, continued, and the government was soon accused of partiality. The exiled Bianchi suffered from the unwholesome climate of Sarzana; and Guido Cavalcanti,[1] who was among them, having become mortally ill, was allowed with others to return in August, 1300.

In the ensuing autumn Corso Donati, then living in exile in the Papal State, heard of the Pope's intention to induce Charles of Valois to undertake a campaign in Sicily; and he used all his influence to procure that prince's intervention in Florence. From his point of view this was indeed a master-stroke; for the all-powerful Guilds could hardly refuse entry into the city to a prince of their best customer, France, backed by the Pope and the King of Naples, the traditional leaders of the Guelf party. The Bianchi had always professed to be good Guelfs; now, he thought, was the time to tear off the mask from their concealed

[1] He was buried at Florence on August 29. For further details of him see Chap. VI.

Ghibellinism. They must have soon perceived the imminence of the danger ; and the measure of their perplexity may be seen in the ineffectiveness of their attempts to avert it. The plots of the Neri in the city continued ; some of them were banished or fined, and Corso's property was partly confiscated. Meanwhile, in the summer of 1301, Charles of Valois crossed the Alps and repaired to Anagni for a consultation with the Pope and King Charles, giving Florence for the moment a wide berth. The King consented to postpone the subjugation of Sicily till the next spring ; and in the meantime his cousin was to be free to act, at the Pope's behest, as " Pacificator of Tuscany."

Had the Bianchi summoned up courage to attack Valois, as he passed through Western Tuscany with only 500 knights, they might have averted their impending ruin. But their favour with the populace was on the wane through the machinations of their opponents ; they dared not take a step which would have compromised their Guelf principles ; above all, they could not begin hostilities with the prince of a friendly country, of whose character and intentions they knew little. Unfortunately that character was but too well suited to the part which he was called on to play. In his campaign against Flanders in 1300 he had shown himself to be both cruel and faithless—qualities which he was to display in even greater measure in his conduct towards Florence. His motive in doing the Pope's bidding against the city seems to have been merely sordid ; he wanted money, and Florence, in the Pope's language, was " the fountain-head of gold." Of all this the Signory was probably ignorant, and the preparations for defence were timid and vacillating. On September 13 the councils assembled in the Podestà's palace and decided to send three envoys to Boniface, of whom Dante was one,[1] to represent to him that whatever discord there might be among the noble families, the people were unalterably attached to their present constitution. It may seem surprising that Dante should have been chosen ; for he had voted six months before against supplying Boniface with a contingent of troops, and the Pope, whose spies were everywhere, had a long and vindictive memory. Perhaps the poet's abilities and firmness of character recom-

[1] It has been positively denied that this embassy was sent, or at least that Dante had any share in it. But the contemporary chronicler, Dino Compagni, is a witness to both facts, and Prof. Villari has shown that he is supported by other testimony of the time.

mended him for so delicate a mission. It was, however, wholly fruitless; the Pope's reply, as recorded by Compagni—"Make humiliation to us"—is altogether in keeping with his character. According to some accounts Dante remained at Rome for a time and did not return with his companions; if so, he was not a spectator of his own ruin and that of his party.

About the same time (October, 1301) Charles sent an embassy from Siena to announce his coming, and also doubtless to report on the state of parties in the city. In a general assembly the majority were warmly in favour of his admission, though one lesser guild (the Bakers) protested against it; but the Signory decided to send envoys to Siena, requiring his written promise under his seal that he would not change the laws, or claim any authority, as delegated from the Empire. Compagni says that he himself, as one of the newly elected priors, read the promises under the prince's seal; but we may presume the Signory was not aware that the Neri had raised 70,000 florins for the pay of his troops.

On November 1 Charles established himself in the Oltrarno quarter with 800 foreign and 1400 Italian horse, and entered the city on the 4th, after sending a detachment to hold the Ponte Trinità. It was a force too weak to subdue Florence, if she had been united; but he was reckoning on the active help of his own partisans and on the indecision of his opponents. He then demanded the "Lordship" of Florence, which was accorded after he had given his pledged word to preserve order and maintain the laws. The promise was broken almost as soon as made. The Neri seized one of the gates; and soon afterwards Corso Donati entered by a postern with his followers, turned out the Signory, and began to plunder the houses of the Bianchi. The Priors protested against these proceedings to Charles as an infraction of the treaty, and the prince talked loudly of vengeance against the man who had hired him; but meanwhile, with the new Podestà Gabrielli, Charles proposed to take hostages from the leading men of both sides. They were rendered with some suspicion on the part of the Bianchi, which was seen to be well founded, when their supporters were imprisoned as criminals, and the others sent back to their homes. Compagni relates that on that evening a red cross appeared in the sky above the public palace and remained visible for some time. Two months before,

the appearance of a comet had caused great alarm ; and the later phenomenon may have been conjured up by the superstitious fears which were then excited. At any rate, for five days in the city and for eight more in the territory, anarchy reigned supreme. The Priors had resigned ; and Florence was given up to plunder and rapine without the least interference on the part of Charles. It is said that a third of it was in flames ; and the Ghibellines, with the leaders of the Bianchi, sought safety in flight. A priest in the suite of Charles exclaimed to his master : " A noble city perishes under thee ! " and received the reply : " Can it be true ? I did not know it."

It would seem as if he had agreed to give free scope to Corso Donati for the gratification of his revenge. The government was now entirely in the hands of the favoured party. Their exiles were freely recalled, and Charles began to extort money from the richer citizens by threats. Meanwhile the Pope, who had little confidence in his own tool, again dispatched the Cardinal of Acquasparta " to convert the citizens to peace and charity." The legate did his best by attempting to arrange reconciliations and even marriages between the noble families ; but when he proposed that each side should have an equal share in the government, he encountered a determined opposition from the victorious faction.

Another outrage about Christmas-time made appeasement still more difficult. Niccolo de' Cerchi was wantonly attacked and murdered on the Africo bridge by Corso's son Simone, though the murderer received a mortal wound in the affray. Dismayed by the consequent popular excitement, the Cardinal threw up his commission and again left the city under an interdict, but not till he had received the 1100 florins promised as the reward of his exertions. He was followed to Rome by Charles of Valois, who apparently wished to persuade the Pope that no peace between the parties was possible, and that the popular government could not be destroyed, unless he threw all his influence on the side of the Neri. Charles returned in March, 1302, but only for a fortnight, during which he trumped up a story of a Bianchi conspiracy against his person, which he punished by further exiles and confiscations. Even Villani, who belonged to the favoured party, admits that this plot was utterly fictitious. At length, on April 4, Charles withdrew with his troops, followed by

the curses of all good citizens, though not till he had extracted from his supporters a promise of subsidies for his Sicilian campaign. In fact, he had received 20,000 florins in the previous December, and 5000 more were granted him in the following year; but as his Sicilian venture had then come to an inglorious close, the latter may be regarded as a personal *douceur* from the victorious party.

Meanwhile, long before he left the city, a campaign of proscription had been begun by the Podestà Gabrielli against the defeated Bianchi. Four of the leaders were banished on January 18; five more, including Dante, on the 27th. During February over 100 sentences of exile were pronounced, and by the end of 1302 the total had reached 600. If to these be added the large number who had withdrawn to escape arrest and had had their property destroyed, the exiles must have amounted to a considerable proportion of the population.

The case of Dante may be taken as typical of the rest. There was not even a pretence of a fair trial; the charges were merely a pretext for getting rid of a political opponent. He and the four companions of his sentence were accused, merely on the ground of "public fame," of embezzlement, extortion, corruption and agitation against the Pope, Charles of Valois and the Guelf cause. Each was condemned in his absence to pay the large fine of 5000 florins, or, in default of payment within three days, to the confiscation of all his goods—in any case, to banishment from Tuscany for two years and to perpetual exclusion from office. By another sentence of March 10 it is decreed in Dante's case that, as he had not appeared and had thus "tacitly admitted" his guilt, he was to be burnt alive, if he ever fell into the power of the republic.

For citizens of the Italian republics, as for those of Greece and Rome, banishment meant something far more serious than it would to-day. It meant separation from all that a man held most dear, and in many cases from all means of obtaining a livelihood. Out of Florence, despite the bitter words with which he constantly assails her, Dante could never be happy. The intensity of thought and feeling, generated by the free civic air in which he had lived, was as the very breath of life to him; and of course his feelings were those of many others, though they might not possess his gift of expressing them.

Among those who suffered in this proscription was a certain lawyer named Petracco dell' Ancisa, who was somewhat younger than Dante, but had already reached a high place in the counsels of the Bianchi. His family [1] was not "noble," but apparently belonged to the class of small landed proprietors in the *contado*, who had embraced the city life of the Guilds in order to increase their wealth. The branch from which Petracco sprang had been "notaries" for three generations—that is, they belonged to the senior of the seven Greater Guilds ("Arti"), who then controlled the administration. Apparently this guild did not supply one of the Priors in the recently established Signory, only because a member of the guild always acted as its "notary" and it might be convenient that he should not vacate his office every two months, like the Priors. It is not clear that the Gonfalonier of Justice (first appointed in 1291) was always chosen from this guild; but even if he were not, he was a magistrate and needed frequent legal advice—all the more because his tenure of office was no longer than that of the Priors. It may seem strange that what we should call a "learned profession" rather than a trade should have a place among the commercial guilds. But these "attorneys," as we should call them, were employed in the service of all the guilds; along with the consuls of each guild they constituted its "court," before which commercial disputes were tried and settled. Moreover they drafted new statutes for the councils, and had the power of "reforming" them—that is, of amending the wording so as to bring them into exact conformity with the frequently varying intentions of the governing councils. When we are told that Petracco was chancellor or secretary of "reformations," [2] we may presume that he presided over this department of notarial work. At that time the notaries of Florence were renowned throughout Europe; and it has been said [3] that as Bologna was the fountain of doctors of the law, so was Florence of doctors of the notariate. At public functions the consul of this guild had precedence over all the other consuls, and walked directly after the chief magistrate of the republic.

[1] For further details see Excursus I.

[2] The Abbé Fuzet (afterwards Archbishop of Rouen) in his *Pétrarque, ses voyages*, etc. (Lille, 1883), p. 2, says that Petracco was Chancellor of the Signory. But no office with this title seems then to have existed.

[3] Goro Dati, quoted in Villari (*op. cit.*), p. 313.

Petracco's grandfather, Ser Garzo, and his father, Ser Parenzo, had been honoured members of the guild; his uncle Migliore was canon of the church in his ancestral township of Incisa, fourteen miles distant on the road to Arezzo. The first was universally respected for his piety and probity [1]; the second, who was still living, had been legal adviser to the Abbey of Settimo and to the Counts Guidi in the Casentino. Of his three sons, "Petracco"—a form, said to be a diminutive [2] of Pietro—followed his father's profession, and his capacity procured him commissions under the Signory. In 1300 he was appointed, along with the famous architect Arnolfo del Lapo (or Cambio), to superintend the building of certain castles in the *contado;* and in the two following years he was dispatched as envoy to Pisa. He was thus in the confidence of the Bianchi leaders; but no record exists of his taking part in the quarrel between the parties.

In his famous letter to Boccaccio about Dante,[3] Petrarch states not only that his father and grandfather were well acquainted with the great poet, but that his father was driven into exile on the same day. A similar statement is made by Dino Compagni; but it does not seem to be corroborated by existing records. From these we learn that Petracco was condemned in his absence on October 20, 1302, on the charge of falsifying an instrument of appeal against Messer Albizo de' Francesi; and that the penalty was a fine of 1000 lire, which had to be paid within ten days, or, if he were apprehended within the territory, he was to have a hand chopped off. No mention is made of a trial; so we may safely assume that the charge was groundless. If Petrarch's statement be correct, we must conclude either that Dante and Petracco withdrew together for fear of vengeance from the Neri, or, assuming the truth of the ambassy of Dante to the Pope and his non-return, that Petracco accompanied him in some official capacity and was similarly detained, but of this no record exists. No further decree against him has been found, except his exclusion from the amnesty of 1311 (to be mentioned

[1] *F.* VI. 3.

[2] De Sade, *Memoires de Pétrarque*, I. pp. 9, 10 (followed by Fuzet and others), says it was due to his small size; but it may be doubted whether it was more than a nickname given to him as a boy, which afterwards became public property.

[3] *F.* XXI. 15.

in the next chapter) ; but that fact rather implies that, like Dante, he had been declared " a rebel " [1] and his available property confiscated. Indeed, under the " Enactments of Justice," these consequences would have followed automatically if he had been a " noble " ; and we have proof that his paternal lands were sold at a later date (probably after 1311), although his father lived four years after the sentence and would have been liable to pay the fine. It seems likely that some further decree was passed of which we have no record. De Sade states [2] that Petracco was married to Eletta Canigiani before his exile ; but the date of the marriage is not known. Considering her age (thirty-eight) at the time of her death, which must have occurred not earlier than 1325,[3] it is far more probable that the marriage took place after the exile (in 1303). Some of the Canigiani at least were in office during the Bianchi *régime*,[3] and were therefore likely to be numbered among the exiles.

The majority of the exiles, including Dante and Petracco, made the Ghibelline city of Arezzo their headquarters, and though not themselves Ghibellines, were forced into a close alliance with that party. At Arezzo Dante formed an intimacy with the Ghibelline leader, Uguccione della Faggiuola ; but he became gradually more and more disgusted with the rank and file of his fellow-exiles. He makes his ancestor Cacciaguida foretell [4] the " bad and foolish company " among whom his lot would be cast ; and he soon set himself against their plan of enforcing their restoration at the point of the sword. However, if we are to credit Petrarch's own words in the letter already quoted, a community of literary tastes as well as companionship in misfortune drew him strongly towards Petracco, and at first they both concurred in their party's schemes. On June 8, 1302, the leaders assembled at San Godenzio in the Apennines, and guaranteed compensation to the Ubaldini nobles for the occupation of some of their castles. In the spring of 1303, having gathered a force of nearly 7000 men by the help of Pisa and Bologna, they occupied

[1] G. O. Corazzini (*La Madre di F. Petrarca*, in *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Ser. V. t. IX. 1892, pp. 297 *seqq.*) asserts that Petracco was not declared a rebel, but only an outlaw, and therefore could purchase and inherit property, but the distinction seems groundless and the assertion doubtful. See Excursus II.

[2] *Op. cit.* I. p. 13.

[3] See Excursus II.

[4] *Par.* XVII. 61 *seq.*

the castle of Pulicciano within the territory; but when the Florentine troops advanced against them, the Bolognese withdrew in alarm, and the exiles were dispersed.

Meanwhile the discord in Florence grew worse than ever. The arrogance of Corso Donati disgusted many on his own side; and his attempts to curry favour with the poorer classes lost him yet more supporters. Some of the exiled "popolani" were recalled; and Rosso della Tosa, with others of the "grandi," supported the popular party. In the riots that ensued there was so much bloodshed that the government was entrusted for sixteen days to the Lucchesi, who quieted the city, but without punishing the guilty, and therefore failed to restore peace. On January 31, 1304, the new Pope Benedict XI., reaping here as elsewhere a very harvest of difficulties from his predecessor's vaulting ambition, dispatched Niccolo da Prato, Cardinal of Ostia, whose sympathies were Ghibelline, on a new mission of conciliation. Arriving on March 10, the Cardinal recommended a general amnesty and the return of all exiles, both Guelf and Ghibelline. He met with great opposition—not openly from Donati so much as from Della Tosa, who feared that many of the exiles, being nobles, would join the ranks of his opponents. Full powers were granted to the Cardinal; but as soon as he spoke of restoring the Bianchi, an outcry was made that the restoration of their goods would injure the Guelf Society. At the Mayday festivities a river-masque was arranged to represent the infernal regions. While the people were crowding on the wooden Carraja bridge to behold it, the structure gave way, and consequently—in Prof. Villari's words [1]—many really went to the next world. The accident was considered ominous of future trouble.

The Cardinal's scheme for an amnesty hung fire; and the Pope wrote to reprove the citizens for their turbulent and riotous conduct. They had implored him to send them a Podestà and had then objected to all the four persons whom he suggested. The Cardinal, however, induced the Signory to consent to a conference at Florence between twelve nobles of the Neri and twelve exiles (six Ghibellines and six Bianchi), for whom safe-conducts were granted. Prof. Villari says that all were nobles; and in that case Petracco, who, according to Dino Compagni, accompanied

[1] *Florentine History* (Eng. trans. 1901), p. 527.

them, must have done so in the capacity of their notary or syndic. They were at first well received, and preliminaries were being settled, when they received private warning that they were in danger of their lives; and on June 8 they hastened to quit the city, leaving their purpose unaccomplished. The Neri had been adroit enough to forge letters from the Cardinal, urging the Bianchi in other cities to support their friends. In vain did the Cardinal protest his innocence. The suspicions of the "popolani" were aroused, and he was vehemently accused of attempting to restore the exiles by force. A day or two later, despairing of success, he left Florence, after pronouncing upon her the curse of the Church; and his action was subsequently confirmed by the Pope.

The malediction, like that poetically uttered by an imaginary Cardinal at Rheims, speedily took effect. On June 10 the Cavalcanti attacked some of the Neri in force and were proving successful, when their houses were set on fire behind them. A strong north wind spread the conflagration to what Villani calls "the marrow and yolk of the city," destroying the Via Calimala and the Mercato Vecchio. About 1700 houses were consumed; and the Cavalcanti, paralysed with terror at the loss of their homes, suspended their threatened blow. The citizens were so stupefied by the disaster that they accepted a suggestion from the Pope that they should send twelve of the Neri leaders, including Donati and Della Tosa, to him at Perugia, to receive proposals of mediation. As soon as the delegates, attended by 150 knights, had left the city, the Cardinal sent word to the exiles in the Tuscan cities that they now had a favourable opportunity to enforce their right by arms. It was rumoured that the Pope had consented to this rather shady transaction; but Villani strongly affirms his disbelief. Anyhow the hint was taken, and troops were rapidly and secretly assembled in the towns where the exiles were most numerous. Of the fortunes of the Neri delegates to Perugia nothing is recorded. Before any terms could be arranged—perhaps before they reached the city—Pope Benedict was dead.[1]

[1] The date of his death is variously stated as the 6th, 7th and 27th of July. The earlier dates are usually given; but the last seems the most likely in view of the events next to be recorded.

CHAPTER II

BIRTH, CHILDHOOD, AND EXILE (1304–1312)

"I WAS born," says Francesco Petrarca, "in the year 1304 of this latest age which begins from Jesus Christ my Hope, on Monday, July 20th, at the first hour of dawn in the Via del Orto of the city of Arezzo. That was a remarkable day to us Florentines for public reasons; for on it, almost at the very hour of my birth, our exiles, who had retired to Arezzo and Bologna, came under arms to the gate of Florence before the sun rose over the hills, intending (if successful) to avenge their banishment with the sword. Though the attempt was abortive, I fancy the recollection of it must be still vivid among their foes from the great excitement and terror which it caused; and indeed until quite recently the day was held in some honour by the people." [1]

This explicit statement by the poet himself should remove all doubt as to the coincidence of the two events, although the date of "the raid" has been variously given. Petrarch does not say positively that his father Petracco took part in the enterprise; but he implies it in one or two touches that show he had heard it from some eye-witness, who was deeply concerned in its success. We have seen that Petracco was high in the confidence of his fellow-exiles; and even the expected event in his own family would hardly have deterred him from sharing their fortunes at the decisive moment.

The attack upon Florence was a boldly devised scheme, ruined, as often happens, by the haste and impatience of some of those engaged in it. It had been arranged that the exiles should assemble at Lastra—a village about two miles from the city on the Bologna road—on the night of July 21. There were three principal bands, from Arezzo, Pisa and Pistoia; and the commander of the last, Tolosato degli Uberti, was to have led

[1] *Sen.* VIII. 1, to Boccaccio, written on July 20, 1366. Petrarch does not say, as Koerting states (*Petrarca's Leben und Werke*, p. 44), that it was observed as a public holiday.

the whole force. But the Arezzo contingent, consisting of 9000 foot and 1600 horse, arrived two days before the time; and its commander, Baschiera de' Tosinghi, was mad enough to push on early next morning with 1200 horse, without waiting for his confederates. At first all went well. Passing without resistance the Porta San Gallo—the gate of the new (then unfinished) wall, giving access only to a suburb—they entered the Piazza di San Marco, where they remained for several hours in the extreme heat, both men and horses suffering tortures from thirst. The horsemen were decked with olive-branches, and offered violence to no one, continually shouting "Peace, Peace!" They had expected to be joined by a large number of sympathizers from within the city, but, as Machiavelli says,[1] these people, who had been favourable to their prayers, opposed them stoutly when they tried to enforce their return by arms. No doubt it was a capital mistake to have come at daybreak; for many would have secretly joined them, if they had arrived early in the night. It was soon spread about that they were accompanied by Tuscan Ghibellines, the ancient foes of the city; and when an advance detachment of the latter forced the Spadai Gate in the old walls and occupied the Piazza San Giovanni, they were confronted by a force of 700 men who drove them back, capturing some prisoners and leaving many wounded and slain. The main body, on hearing of this repulse, dispersed in headlong flight. The Bologna contingent, which had been left at Lastra and made no attempt to stay the pursuers, immediately returned homewards; and, though they met Tolosato degli Uberti with his horsemen from Pistoia, they refused to turn and do battle for a lost cause. The whole affair, as so often happens, was shamefully mismanaged, and the exiles were left to reflect on the truth of Machiavelli's dictum about conspiracies that, while delay takes away opportunity, premature haste is destructive of force.

If Petracco were among the fugitives, he would doubtless make at once for the humble house at Arezzo, where he would find his newborn boy scarcely breathing[2] and his young wife

[1] *History of Florence*, Bk. II.

[2] I follow the reading of the Paris MS. of the *Preface to F.*—"*diu exanimis haberer*" (for "*haberetur*"). The adjective appears more suited to the child than to the mother; but what really settles the question is the sentence that follows: "Thus (*ita*) I began to be in danger before I was born and was ushered by death to the very threshold of life." He means that as he appeared to be dead, death (*i.e.* its semblance) introduced

in a state of dangerous weakness. Her labour had been so severe and long continued that for some time both doctors and midwives thought her offspring was stillborn.

The house where he was born, in "Garden Street" (Vicolo dell' Orto), near the centre of the town, is still standing; it is marked by a stone outside and by a tablet on the wall—placed there by several admirers in 1810. That it has been preserved for more than six centuries is doubtless due to the fact that, even in his lifetime, his native town was proud of its famous citizen. As early as 1350, when the poet was only entering middle life, the occupier of the house was forbidden by the authorities to enlarge it or make any alteration in it. Well might Petrarch say to a friend, like himself a native of the place, that Arezzo had done more for a stranger than Florence for her own son![1] Centuries later this affectionate veneration received its reward, if it be true that in 1800 Napoleon did not exact penalties from Arezzo for its obstinate resistance after Marengo from his respect for the memory of Petrarch.

Here, then, in the old Etruscan city, at the western base of the Apennines—noted of old for its pottery and afterwards for its long list of famous natives[2]—the chief lyric singer of Italy first saw the light. His stay, however, was brief; for, in his seventh month—in February, 1305—his mother was by some concession allowed to reside with her babe in her father-in-law's house at Incisa in Florentine territory. We cannot suppose that this step would be taken without the consent of the rulers of the republic; and indeed Petrarch expressly says that his mother was "recalled from exile."[3] But the omission of his father's name in this passage precludes the supposition[4] that the favour was extended to him.

him to life. It would be more than maladroit to use "*auspicium*" of his mother's peril.

[1] *Sen.* XIII. 3 (to Giov. Aretino). "*Plusque advenæ præstat Aretium quam Florentia.*"

[2] Among these Mæcenas has been reckoned, but this origin applies rather to his clan than to himself. Others are the monk Guido, the inventor of musical notation, Guittone the poet, Leonardo Bruni the historian, Vasari, Pietro Aretino, Julius III., Cesalpini the naturalist, and Redi the scholar and poet. Michael Angelo was born at Caprese in the immediate neighbourhood.

[3] *Ep. Post.*, "*revocata ab exilio genitrice.*" These words conclude the sentence, so that Fracassetti's punctuation is wrong.

[4] Apparently this is the view of M. Henry Cochin, *Le Frère de Pétrarque*, p. 10.

Incisa is about fourteen miles from Florence on one of the roads to Rome, which after another twenty miles or more passes by Arezzo. The young wife no doubt had to make her journey on horseback; and as she could not carry her child, he had to be wrapped in linen and swung at the end of a staff on the back of a strong native youth, who was also mounted. This method of conveyance, described by the poet with some complacency fifty years later,[1] appears rather unsafe, and so it proved, for in crossing the Arno, which in February would doubtless be in spate, the guide's horse slipped, and the rider with his precious burden was thrown into the torrent. He nearly lost his own life in trying to save that of the child; but fortunately both were preserved. The road from Arezzo to Incisa crosses the Arno twice; and it was probably at the second crossing, in the wild gorge, three miles long, near Laterina, called the "Valle d'Inferno," that the accident happened.[2]

At Incisa the young Francesco remained probably more than seven years, during the most impressionable period of childhood. This little township, the home of his paternal ancestors, lies in the most beautiful part of the Upper Valdarno, where the rugged wildness of Apennine scenery is united with the smiling cultivation of the valley. The south-eastern part of this valley is from three to five miles in breadth between retreating ranges of hills; but at Incisa, where it turns due north, the mountains close again on both sides, and the Arno has cut for itself, through a ridge of limestone rock coming down from Vallombrosa, a deep channel, which has given its Latin name[3] to the spot. On the western bank rise steep rounded hills covered with vegetation at the foot of which the village nestles; on the eastern are the lower foothills of the Pratomagno range, dotted, wherever possible, with vineyards and olives. The place is not isolated, for it lies on one—though not the shorter—

[1] In the *Preface to F.* He compares the rescue of the infant Camilla by her father in crossing a river, Virgil, *Æn.* XI. 540–564.

[2] Four of Petrarch's early biographers place this mishap on the journey to Pisa, but, as de Sade remarks, a child of seven would not be carried in this fashion. The mistake is due to Petrarch's unaccountable statement that he was borne round the whole of Tuscany, "*totâ Tusciâ circumlatus*" (*Preface to F.*).

[3] Curiously enough in *Ep. Post.*—and in the Latinized names of the family (Johannes Anchisæus, *F.* III. 18)—Petrarch employs the variant "Ancisa" which is now disused. I cannot find any ancient authority for this form.

of the two main roads from Florence to Rome, which passes through Cortona; and it thus combined, as the poet himself was afterwards so fond of combining, the advantages of retirement with some knowledge of the movements of the busy world.

A small house, still standing within the limits of a ruined castle, is indicated by tradition as the place of his early boyhood; and though now inhabited by peasants, its walls are ancient and show signs of having once been part of a more pretentious building. A tablet at the entrance commemorates the fact that here he first heard and learnt the accents of his mother-tongue. Most important it was—for part at least of his future work—that the first seven years of his life were passed in Tuscany. All around him he would hear the mellifluous Tuscan idiom—the purest strain of the musical Italian language; and nature had given him not only—what was then so uncommon—an eye for the beauty of scenery, but also an ear for sound and rhythm that was faultless in its delicacy. No doubt, even in exile, the Tuscan speech was the language of his home life; but if he had been transplanted to Provence in his infancy, he would have heard, out of doors, and at home from servants, a strange and a harsher dialect. These early years spent in Florentine territory enabled him, in all his later wanderings, to look upon Tuscany, not merely as by accident the place of his birth, but as his original home—the scene on which his dawning intelligence first beamed, and the inspiration of his consummate craftsmanship in poetry.

Although Petracco was still debarred by law from returning with his wife to his ancient home, there can be little doubt that he often evaded the prohibition. His visits would of course be secret and made in disguise; but he would probably have the sympathies of all his old acquaintances, and the villages of the Valdarno would not be strongly policed. At any rate, in the next three years two more sons were born to him, probably at Incisa. The name of the elder [1] of these has not been preserved; but we learn from a letter of Petrarch's old age [2] that the younger, who was called Gherardo (probablyfrom a relative of his mother[3]),

[1] Mr. Hollway-Calthrop, in his *Petrarch* (p. 9), supposes that this son, alluded to in *F.* II. 1 and *F.* IX. 2, was the younger; but the latter passage distinctly implies the contrary.

[2] *Sen.* XV. 5, where he states (in 1373) that Gherardo was then the same age as he himself was in 1370.

[3] See Excursus II.

was three years his junior, and was therefore born in 1307. The elder did not long survive; but the little Francesco was old enough to remember him and to mourn his loss,[1] so that the brother must have been three or four years old at his death. Still earlier in their stay—in 1306—the grandfather, Ser Parenzo dell' Ancisa, died apparently at this family home; but the death there[2] of the great-grandfather Garzo must have taken place sooner, though he lived to be one hundred and four; for Petrarch's notice of him does not imply any personal acquaintance. It is not clear to whom the property belonged after the grandfather's death. Petracco himself could not inherit—at least so long as he failed to make his submission,—and his brother Lapo was exiled with him; but it is possible that the other brother, Graziano, or a sister, maintained the establishment.

It does not seem likely that the attempt by Cardinal Napoleon Orsini in 1307 to restore the Bianchi to Florence was actively assisted by Petracco. For in the following year (1308) an olive-branch was held out to him by the rulers of that city; and this step would hardly have been taken if he had recently been in arms against her. A decree was passed, giving him the opportunity of restoration, if he would first enter the prison, and thence go bareheaded in a procession to the Baptistery, where he would be absolved from his crime on payment of an offering. Petracco plainly considered that his acceptance would amount to an acknowledgment of his guilt[3]; and he therefore refused to comply with the conditions.

It would be interesting if we could know where he spent this period of his exile. If Arezzo were still his headquarters, he may have had to leave it at the close of 1308, when the Guelfs of that city obtained control over it for four months. But in April, 1309, this "Green Party"—as they styled themselves—was expelled; and the Ghibelline family of Tarlati, to which the able Bishop Guido belonged, was reinstated. An attack by Florentine troops, which ravaged the neighbourhood to the very walls, was

[1] So we may conclude from *F.* II 1, "*fraternæ necis vulnus excepi.*"

[2] In his account of this worthy veteran (*F.* VI. 3), Petrarch says that he died on his birthday, in the very room in which he was born, having shortly before foretold the date of his own decease.

[3] *Liber Strozzi*, Chap. X. De Sade (I. p. 18) apparently thinks that, as he was not to wear the criminal's cap, his innocence was assumed; but the other conditions are inconsistent with this view.

the natural result; and in June, 1310, a stronger force was on the eve of starting, when a messenger arrived from Henry VII. (of Luxemburg), the new "King of the Romans," forbidding the expedition and declaring that Arezzo, as a fief of the Empire, was to be left in peace until his arrival. In spite of this prohibition the army marched, taking doubtless the road through Incisa, and would have obtained possession of the city (which they actually entered) but for the half-heartedness of some of the nobles, who for private reasons preferred the establishment of a fort in the plain at two miles' distance.

The same year (1309), which witnessed the crowning of Henry at Aachen (Aix), saw also the coronation at Avignon by Pope Clement V. of Robert of Naples (September 8), the foremost champion of the Guelf cause. On his return journey with his queen he stayed some days at Florence, but proceeded southwards by the Siena road, so that the young Francesco at Incisa had no chance of seeing his future patron. Thenceforward all decrees of the Florentine Commune began with the words: "In honour of Holy Church and His Majesty King Robert, and to the defeat of the German King." [1]

In the closing months of 1310 the hearts of the Florentine exiles were gladdened by the arrival in Italy of this "German King," who had come with the Pope's approval to receive the Imperial crown in Rome. With the political aspect of this startling event I must deal in the next chapter. It is sufficient now to recall the bare dates of the Emperor-elect's progress, in order to estimate the alternations of hope and fear and gradual disillusion, to which the Florentine Bianchi were exposed. Henry arrived at Asti on October 20, and spent two months in Piedmont, collecting his Lombard supporters. At the end of the year he arrived at Milan, where he received the Iron Crown in the church of St. Ambrose on the Feast of the Epiphany, 1311. Whether through his fault or misfortune, within two months many of the Lombard cities were in revolt, and there had been a rising even within the walls of Milan. He spent the entire summer in reducing these to submission, particularly Brescia, which delayed him two months; and on October 21 he betook himself to Genoa, where he remained four months.

These were exciting times, no doubt; but the leisurely advance

[1] Villari, *Florentine History*, p. 550.

of the Emperor-elect brought much disappointment to his most eager adherents—especially to those Florentine exiles, who saw no hope of returning to their native city but by his means. Dante, the most illustrious of all, could not conceal his impatience with Henry for dallying in Northern Italy. In his second letter from the sources of the Arno (Epistle VII.), which is dated April 18, he remonstrates with the sovereign for his delay, and urges him at once to strike at Florence as "the root of the evil." But at this time Henry turned a deaf ear; he still clung to his self-imposed rôle of "pacificator of Italy," and upholder of even-handed justice. It is unfortunate that we know so little of Dante's movements at this critical time. From an expression in the above letter (which may, however, be metaphorical) it has been concluded that he hastened to Milan to make his obeisance to Henry at the beginning of the year. But if so, he evidently did not remain with him; and his advice to attack the Guelfic league at its centre passed unheeded. Of the other exiles, some had taken service in the Imperial army; while many, perhaps, were still sitting on the fence, unwilling to take arms against their country, which would be reckoned an offence past all forgiveness.

In which class are we to place the humble notary, Petracco? In the famous letter to Boccaccio on Dante,[1] Petrarch states that the latter was on terms of intimacy with his father, partly, no doubt, from their exile together in the same civil broil, but also from the similarity of their tastes and studies. But he draws this contrast between them, that whereas Dante neglected everything in order to resist such unjust treatment, Petracco yielded to it from solicitude for his family and the necessity of providing for them. No doubt Petrarch is here contrasting the general conduct of the two men, as illustrated especially by his father's withdrawal from Italy. We need not conclude from this that Petracco entertained no hopes of his restoration through the coming of Henry VII. Indeed, his conduct at this time in taking his family from their retreat at Incisa and residing with them for a whole year in the Ghibelline city of Pisa distinctly implies the contrary.

Now what was the date of this change of residence? Unfortunately, Petrarch makes two different statements, which are

[1] *F.* XXI. 15.

irreconcileable. In the Preface to his first collection of letters [1] he tells us that he left Pisa in the seventh year of his "age"; but in his Letter to Posterity he says that he "spent the eighth year of his life at Pisa." In face of these contradictory recollections, which it is futile to explain away,[2] we are driven to consider the probabilities of the case from the political circumstances of the time. That Petracco should betake himself alone to Pisa at any time when the Emperor-elect might be expected is not surprising; but that he should remove his family from Incisa to a place where he could have little or no means of providing for them by getting a regular living surely indicates some anxiety for their safety.

It was inevitable that the advent of the Emperor-elect should produce much exacerbation of feeling between Guelf and Ghibelline. Till the ill-treatment of his envoys in the autumn of 1311, coupled with his discovery that Florence was financing the resistance of Brescia, Henry seems to have expected that the proud Guelf city would make her submission. But her citizens never dreamed of so humiliating a surrender. They were well aware that the Emperor's forces were not large, nor his purse as long as their own. Their chief anxiety—which in June, 1311, was well founded—was lest Robert of Naples, whose military power was indispensable, should make his own peace with Henry behind their backs. During that summer it was the general opinion that if the Emperor, following Dante's advice, had left the Lombard cities alone and marched against Florence, "the root of the evil," he would have met with little or no resistance.[3] The danger to the city was pressing; and the rulers of the leading faction came to the wise decision to close up the ranks of the citizens by recalling all exiles who had not openly espoused the Imperial cause. But there was a long list [4]—as many as nine

[1] And also in his letter of reminiscence to Gui Sette, *Sen.* X. 2.

[2] F. Lo Parco (*Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana*, Vol. XLVIII. fasc. 142, p. 58) makes a lame and unconvincing attempt to explain the discrepancy by supposing that Petrarch's "seventh year" is reckoned not from his birth, but from his arrival at Incisa—a subterfuge which contradicts Petrarch's plain statement. A. Gaspary (*Storia delle Letteratura Italiana*, translation by N. Zingarelli, p. 479) more justly considers the two passages incompatible, though he favours 1312 for the journey to Avignon. His translator, in his *Dante*, 1903, supports the conclusion of the text.

[3] Gregorovius, *History of the City of Rome* (English translation), Vol. VI. Pt. I. p. 35.

[4] Some at least of the names are extant (see Del Lungo, *Esilio di*

hundred—of the "Excepted" (Eccettati), among whom was Dante Alighieri, and also—perhaps because of his friendship with the poet—the notary Petracco, with his brother Lapo. The law of recall [1] was formally passed on September 2, 1311; but it was doubtless in contemplation for a couple of months before, and an exile, who had friends in the city, would have means of discovering beforehand whether his name was, or was likely to be, on the proscribed list. The last term is appropriate enough, for a decree was passed simultaneously that the "Eccettati" were to be for ever incapable of pardon, and that their names were never to be mentioned in the public councils. On hearing of this proposal, Petracco might well determine, in July or August, 1311, to remove his wife and boys from the territory of the republic. If this conjecture be correct the removal took place at the beginning of Petrarch's eighth year, in accordance with the statement in the Epistle to Posterity.

Signor Paganini,[2] who thinks that the sojourn in Pisa lasted from December, 1310, to December, 1311, argues that Petrarch could not have seen the splendid entry of Henry VII. into Pisa on March 6, 1312, or he would have described it in his writings. But "the argument from silence," as our Biblical critics are beginning to discover, is radically unsound—especially in the case of a child in his eighth year. His elders might naturally decide that the public streets on such a day were scarcely safe for a boy of his tender years. At that age he would be much more struck by the camels brought from the East during the Crusades, which were kept close by between Pisa and the sea; but we could not safely conclude that he was not taken to see them because he has not recorded the fact. In December, 1310, the enterprise of Henry was still in its infancy. He had scarcely passed the boundaries of Piedmont; and though the Ghibellines of the north were flocking to his standard, they were much disappointed at the equal favour which he then accorded

Dante, pp. 107 *seq.*). The "sons" of Ser Parenzo dell' Ancisa (probably Petracco and Lapo) are in the list.

[1] Named from its proposer "The Law of Baldo d'Aguglione."

[2] P. Paganini, *Atti della R. Accad. Lucchese*, t. XXI. pp. 169–214. He thinks that Petrarch's description of Pisa in his *Itin. Syr.* shows that what chiefly impressed him in his youth was the number of its towers (said to have amounted to 16,000). But the *Itinerary*—a work of his later years after he had revisited Pisa at least twice—merely describes the view of it from the sea which he enjoyed in February, 1341.

to the Guelfs. But by the events of the following summer his eyes were opened to distinguish between friend and foe. On his arrival at Genoa in October his negotiation with Robert of Naples was abruptly closed; on November 20 he cited the rebellious Florentines before his tribunal, and upon their non-appearance declared them by public crier to be under the ban of the Empire (December 24). These measures did not greatly disturb them, but they must have revived hope in the breasts of the exiles; and the December of 1311 was the least likely period for Petracco to consider his cause lost. He must have known that his old acquaintance and protector, Niccolo da Prato, was one of the three cardinal-legates appointed by the Pope to crown the Emperor-elect in Rome; and as the Cardinal had already for some months been in attendance on Henry,[1] it would be of the first importance to consult him as to his chances of restoration to Florence.

We may thus safely conclude that the exiled family spent the winter of 1311–12 at Pisa, along with many of their fellow-exiles, on the tiptoe of expectation. Of all the cities of Italy Pisa was the most steadfast in her devotion to the Imperial cause, which now, after sixty years of neglect, still found in her its most zealous defender. But at this time the city retained but a mere shadow of its former greatness. The naval defeat by Genoa in 1284, followed six years later by the destruction of her proper harbour, had restricted Pisa's maritime activity; and though she still kept a precarious hold upon the island of Sardinia, she was far surpassed in wealth by her great Guelf neighbour. Those monuments, which are her glory to the modern traveller—the cathedral, the baptistery, the "leaning tower" (except the upper storey), the Campo Santo—had all been built, the first for more than a century. The architect of the last, Giovanni Pisano, was still living in old age; but most of its frescoes, now so sadly injured by time, are of later date, though those by Giotto had been recently painted. The city was still densely populated, having contained in its prime 100,000 inhabitants—nearly five times the number of its citizens in the first half of the nineteenth century.

On February 16, 1312, Henry, who two months before had

[1] The legates arrived early in the summer while Henry was besieging Brescia, and were instrumental in inducing that town to capitulate.

lost his consort in Genoa, sailed from that city with the three cardinals delegated to crown him at Rome, and with many magnates of the Empire, but with a very insufficient force of soldiers. Storms and contrary winds detained his ships for thirteen days (February 21 to March 5) at Porto Venere; but on March 6 he landed at Porto Pisano, and the same day made his entry into the Ghibelline city. He was received with acclamations; the citizens supplied him liberally with galleys, troops and money, and bestowed upon him the lordship of the town. Ghibelline exiles came in from all quarters, and among them, we can have little doubt, came the sovereign poet, Dante. It is true that we have no proof of this visit from the scanty particulars of his exile. But Petrarch, in a letter of 1359,[1] says that the poet had once been pointed out to him "in the first part of his boyhood." Nothing could be more improbable than that Dante should have ventured to Incisa between 1309 and 1311—the only years spent there which would have been within Petrarch's recollection[2]; and therefore we are constrained to fix the event during the six-weeks' stay of Henry VII. at Pisa, unless it took place—which is far less likely—a few months later at Genoa, or on the journey thither. The life of Petrarch thus contributes a fairly certain date to the exile-wanderings of Dante.

During those spring weeks there must have been anxious consultations between the principal exiles and their old friend, the Cardinal da Prato of Ostia. Would Henry march at once upon Florence? And, if he succeeded in gaining the city, would he insist upon the restoration of all exiles and a complete amnesty for past offences? The Cardinal, who was in some measure behind the scenes, must have had but few crumbs of comfort for his eager questioners. It was patent to all that the Imperial forces were at present insufficient to cope with the Guelfic league; and it must have soon leaked out that Henry intended to avoid Tuscany in his march to Rome. Bad news would come that Florentine agents were tampering with the loyalty of the Lombard cities in the rear; and it seemed fairly certain that the astute

[1] *F.* XXI. 15. "Primâ pueritiæ parte monstratum."

[2] Paganini (*op. cit.*), in conformity with his own theory, maintains that Petrarch must have seen Dante before December, 1311. But the latter would have been far more likely to visit Pisa when the Emperor was there, and would be as anxious as Petracco to consult the Ghibelline cardinal.

King of Naples, who was obviously playing a double part, might oppose by force Henry's entry into the Eternal City. Soon after his arrival at Pisa, the latter sent Stefano Colonna—Petrarch's aged friend of later days—to Rome to report upon the state of affairs; and on April 19 he also sent Pandolfo Savelli and the Bishop of Botronto to remonstrate with Prince John of Naples for occupying with his troops the Vatican and the Castle of St. Angelo. Probably all that the Cardinal could do for his exiled friends was to counsel patience, and to promise that he would send them intelligence of the course of events at Rome.

On April 23 Henry left for Rome by way of Viterbo, at the head of the paltry force of 2000 horse and about 1500 infantry. His envoys were plainly informed by Prince John that he had received orders from his brother to oppose the German entry; and they at once left Rome in dismay under a safe-conduct to meet their master. They were taken to the Castello d'Isola on May 5; but, finding that Neapolitan mercenaries were concealed in the building, they thought it safer to ride forward and meet Henry's advanced guard, among whom they found the Cardinal of Ostia. As soon as they had related their experiences, the Cardinal, to their great amusement, turned his horse and fled.[1]

At the moment it may have been personal cowardice; but Nicholas of Ostia probably knew better than any, except his two fellow-legates, that Neapolitan opposition would be the ruin of Henry's cause. Naples was the protected vassal of the Holy See; and though Clement V., in order to spite his gaoler, the King of France, had encouraged the Emperor-elect's descent upon Italy, he had no intention of allowing him to destroy the Guelf party, of which the Pope was the traditional head. On May 7 Henry crossed the Tiber by the Ponte Molle under the arrows of his foes, and found Rome a mass of hostile fortresses and barricades. The Vatican and St. Peter's were closed to him, and it was eighteen days before the Capitol surrendered. An attempt against the Vatican quarter on the 26th was repulsed with considerable loss; and Henry then formally demanded of the cardinals that they should crown him in St. John Lateran, as Lothair had been crowned nearly two hundred years before. The legates replied that they had precise instructions for the

[1] *Iter Italicum*, by the Bishop of Botronto, in Muratori, *Scriptores Rer. Ital.*

ceremony, and that to alter the place of it was beyond their commission. Under pressure they consented to send to the Pope for fresh authority ; but meanwhile Henry's small force, depleted by losses and by the extreme heat of the city, was rapidly melting away. His only resource was to summon an assembly of the people and urge them to insist on compliance with his wish. On June 22 the populace attacked the Torre delle Milizie, where the legates resided, and extorted a reluctant promise that if the Pope's answer did not come within eight days, they would wait no longer. Accordingly on the 29th—the Feast of St. Peter—the ceremony took place in the Lateran, the Cardinal of Ostia [1] placing the golden crown upon the Emperor's head. One of the conditions imposed by Clement was that Henry should leave the city three days after his coronation. In spite of the statements of some authors, this order was not literally complied with. The Romans objected vehemently to being left defenceless against their foes ; and nearly three weeks elapsed before Henry, leaving behind him a small garrison, retired to Tivoli, where he arrived, attended by but a few followers, on July 21.

At that moment the Ghibelline cause must have seemed lost beyond recall. On the previous day—Petrarch's eighth birthday—the Commune of Florence wrote triumphantly to Pistoia that the Emperor was in peril of death. The Neapolitans had been strongly reinforced ; while 400 German knights, with the Dukes of Savoy and Bavaria, insisted on returning home, now that the ceremony was over. At this juncture the Pope's belated reply was received ; and it may be guessed that the cardinals, who had only awaited its arrival, were pretty well aware of its contents. Henry, whose indignation against Robert had been stirred by the events of the summer, was bidden to conclude a year's armistice with the King ; he must liberate all his prisoners, restore the fortresses that he had taken in Rome, and at once quit the domains of the Church. Behind these insolent terms lurked the " mailed fist " of the King of France ; but it is hardly likely that they would have been thus formulated but for a private report of the cardinals that Henry's strength had been grievously reduced, and that a firm tone might prevent an attack upon Naples. The chivalrous Henry, furious at his humiliating position, asked the opinion of Roman jurists as to the Pope's right to demand such

[1] Some say it was Arnold Pellagrue, the Cardinal of St. Sabina.

terms of the Emperor, and received an equivocal reply. No wonder that the Cardinal of Ostia insisted on taking his leave on July 25, and he was soon followed by his fellow-legates.

We do not know the route taken by the Cardinal on his return; but it is likely that he would travel by land as far as Genoa, and take Pisa on his way. There he might see Petracco; and if so, he would tell him plainly of the Pope's decision, which as a prince of the Church he would regard as final, and of the small likelihood of the exiles' restoration to Florence. Whether he met him or no, it seems certain that he urged him by letter to betake himself with his family to Avignon, where he could guarantee him constant employment. Petrarch himself testifies to the regard which the Cardinal felt for his father and to the affection which for his sake he extended to his young son, who was only seventeen at the time of the Cardinal's death.[1]

It was a momentous decision to take; but that it was taken at this time and for the reasons above stated may be regarded as almost certain. Most of Petrarch's biographers[2] give the year 1313 as the date of his leaving his native shores, apparently thinking it inconceivable that Petracco should have quitted Italy till after the death of Henry VII. But apart from the difficulty that Petrarch nowhere places his migration as late as his tenth year,[3] a new fact has recently transpired, which indicates that it was not later than the autumn of 1312. On October 24 of that year the members of the great Florentine banking firm of the Frescobaldi at Avignon were committed to prison at the suit of Walter Langton, Bishop of Lichfield and Chester, at that time Treasurer of Edward II.; and on the 26th the firm engaged four advocates, all Italians, at twenty florins each, whose proctor or solicitor was one Ser Petracco.[4] No absolute proof can be given that this was Petrarch's father; but as the name is very

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Fracassetti). "*Cardinalis Hostiensis Episcopus, cui ego puer patris intuitu carus fui.*"

[2] De Sade (t. I. p. 20), as Gaspary notices, is inconsistent in this matter. After indicating that Petracco did not move till the Emperor was dead, he says that he arrived at Avignon at the beginning of 1313. This may be a misprint for 1314.

[3] His tenth year began on July 20, 1313. Therefore the Letter to Posterity, in stating that he spent his ninth year in France, clearly excludes the autumn of 1313 as the beginning of his exile. Mr. T. Okey in his *Avignon* (Mediæval Towns), p. 80, misinterprets the passage.

[4] C. Johnson, *An Italian Financial House in the Fourteenth Century* (Transactions of the St. Albans Architectural Society, Vol. I. p. 331).

uncommon, the identification is highly probable. The Frescobaldi were a well-known Florentine family, at one time Ghibellines, but now Guelfs; their home residence was in the Oltrarno district, and they were therefore neighbours of Petracco's wife's family, the Canigiani. They were probably imprisoned either for breach of contract in providing a loan, or for breaking the Church's law by demanding too high a rate of interest.

A further reason which seems almost conclusive for placing the migration in the autumn of 1312 rather than in 1313 (after the death of Henry VII.) is that at the former date the Pope and Curia were in Avignon, but that twelve months later they had moved to Carpentras. Clement returned to Avignon after the close of the Council of Vienne (May 6, 1312) and remained there almost exactly a year, removing on May 6 or 7, 1313.[1] If Petracco did not leave Pisa till towards the end of 1313, there would have been ample time for the Cardinal of Ostia to apprise him of the Pope's change of plan, which might have caused him to abandon his retreat to France. In 1312 the Curia had been three years in Avignon[2]; and the prospect of its remaining there had already attracted many Italians to the city. It is true that Petracco's work may have been more civil than ecclesiastical; but the withdrawal of the Curia, if it had proved permanent, would have lost him the patronage of the Italian cardinals.

The Cardinal of Ostia was right as to the desperate state of the Emperor's affairs, as events were soon to prove. But Petracco had scarcely left Pisa before Henry made his long-desired move against Florence. Having received some reinforcements, he arrived at Arezzo on September 12; and the Republic sent a large part of its force to oppose his passage by occupying the castle at Incisa—the home of Petrarch's early years. But the Emperor, guided by some of the exiles, turned their position by taking a by-road across the mountains and appeared before the gate of San Gallo at Florence on the 19th. His force, however, was too small to capture the city, which, according to Villani, kept all its other gates open and went about its business as usual. Towards the end of the year, Henry, after ravaging the *contado*, withdrew first to Poggibonzi, near Siena, where his army was in

[1] J. B. Joudou, *Histoire des Souverains Pontifes qui ont siégé à Avignon*, I. 103.

[2] Koerting (p. 57) rightly says that in 1313 Avignon was not the Papal residence, yet he strongly adheres to the later date for Petracco's removal.

great straits, and finally to Pisa. Here, after concluding an alliance with Frederick of Sicily, he prepared for his campaign against Naples. In the ensuing summer (1313) he moved southwards with his army; but his health, enfeebled by the climate and by the disappointments of the previous year, gave much cause for alarm, and on August 24 he suddenly expired at Buonconvento, near Siena. The usual rumour was spread that he died of poison, administered by a Dominican friar along with the Host. But though his death was probably as welcome to the Church authorities as to the Guelfic League, there appears to be no other ground for the suspicion. Petracco in his exile must have been relieved that he had not waited long enough to witness the end of the unhappy enterprise.

The first important journey of one who was to be afterwards so frequent a traveller is a matter of some interest. By what route did Petracco take his family beyond the Alps? It is often said [1] that the first stage was by sea from Livorno, the new port of Pisa, to Genoa. But a passage in a letter of forty years later [2] from Petrarch to the Doge and Council of Genoa indicates not doubtfully that this part of the journey was made by land, which seems in every way more likely. There was then, as now, a frequented road through Massa and Sarzana, and thence along the Genoese Riviera by Sestri, Rapallo, and Nervi to Genoa. Petrarch seems to have been deeply impressed with the beauty of this Riviera. He describes it minutely in the *Africa* and in the *Itinerarium Syriacum*. Yet, so far as we know, he only once traversed it by land in his later years, and that was on his journey to Naples in 1343, when this part of the *Africa* was already complete, though not revised.[3]

In the letter just mentioned he is recalling the minds of the nobles to the time of his first visit, when Genoa was one of the most prosperous of Italian states:

[1] Originally by De Sade, who gives no authority, but is followed as usual by others. Yet the "*maritimum iter*" of the Preface need refer only to the voyage from Genoa to Marseilles. Mr. Hollway-Calthrop (p. 14) rightly prefers a land journey.

[2] *F.* XIV. 5 (1352).

[3] The passage (Bk. VI. 839–864) may of course have been "a purple patch" added subsequently, and he may have travelled this way on his journey from Rome in 1337. But early impressions are sometimes the deepest, as *F.* XIV. 5, shows.

"At that time I was an infant,[1] and my recollection of it seems almost like a dream. That gulf of yours, the coasts of which look towards the rising and setting of the sun, seemed a region of heaven rather than of earth, or like those Elysian fields, described by the poets—gentle eminences and green valleys, traversed by pleasant paths, and, in the villages, the souls of the blest. Who did not marvel at the lofty towers and palaces, the hill-sides clothed with cedar and vine and olive (nature subdued by art), and the marble dwellings beneath high rocks, such as any king might long for and any city envy? Who did not look with astonishment at those delicious recesses, where gilded halls nestled along the cliffs, amidst the roar of the sea and the spray of the tempest—a bright and novel spectacle, which held the voyager's gaze and kept the rower hanging on his oar? Or if you were journeying by land, what traveller did not pause on his way, amazed at the splendid dress of men and matrons, at the delicious nooks and sylvan haunts in the remotest places, far away from towns? Finally, when you arrived at the city, you might think yourself entering a city of kings, as was said of Rome —the very temple of prosperity and threshold of gladness." [2]

At Genoa the party took ship for Marseilles; and among the passengers was a small and delicate-looking boy of his own age,[3] who was to be Petrarch's earliest friend and to continue in closest intimacy till his death as Archbishop of Genoa, fifty-five years later. Petrarch calls him "Guido Septimus," which has been Italianized by Fracassetti into "Gui (or Guido) Settimo"; but in the epitaph on his tomb at Cervara the surname is given as "Scetten," which hardly has an Italian sound. The family originally came from the decayed city of Luni,[4] but Guido was apparently born at Sarzana, four miles to the north.[5] His parents, like Petrarch's, were migrating to the Papal Court; we do not know the father's occupation or profession—possibly he was in trade. A strong friendship soon sprang up, not only between the boys, but between their parents, who were to be neighbours for some years to come. It is interesting to think that of the two boys, who gazed in rapt delight at the proud city and her splendid

[1] A characteristic exaggeration, as he was then eight years old.

[2] Following this passage comes an allusion to the Pisan and Venetian wars of 1290–1300 as "not long before that time."

[3] *Sen.* X. 2 *ad fin.*

[4] Dante (*Par.* XVI. 73) speaks of Luni as if it had been destroyed. It had been twice wasted by Normans (in 857 and 1016), but in his time it still had a bishop (Gherardo da Filettieri).

[5] E. Celesia, *Petrarca in Liguria* (1874), p. 13.

harbour, one was to be her mentor and defender in her less prosperous days, the other was to be fifteen years Archdeacon and eight years Archbishop of her cathedral church.

The voyage of the emigrants, if we are to accept the account of the Preface to the Familiar Letters,[1] was not a fortunate one. Not far from Marseilles the vessel was driven on shore by a storm, and the passengers had some difficulty in getting safely to land. The expression "hiberni aquilones,"[2] which Petrarch uses of this storm, need not be taken too literally. A north wind would have driven them out to sea rather than against the land; and perhaps "aquilo" is used merely for "a gale." It was more probably one of the strong south-west winds that attend the autumnal equinox; and the adjective may be used merely as indicating the winter half of the year. It is this word which has led most of Petrarch's biographers to suppose that the move took place in the depth of winter—a thing in itself most unlikely. Dates were not a strong point with Petrarch, as we shall often have occasion to note.

With the arrival of Petracco's family at Avignon we are confronted with a new chronological difficulty owing to the inexactness of Petrarch's notes of time in his reminiscences of old age. From a passage in his letter to Gui Sette of 1367 (*Sen.* X. 2), it might be supposed that through the lack of accommodation in Avignon the fathers of the two emigrant families were obliged to arrange that their wives and children should take up their abode at Carpentras—fifteen miles away, while they went themselves to find bachelor quarters in Avignon and visit their families when they could. These are Petrarch's exact words, omitting subordinate clauses that do not bear on the matter:

"The goal of our boyhood's travel was the city of Avignon, at that time a constricted spot, ill provided with houses and overflowing with a motley crowd of inhabitants. Our fathers' plan was that the women and boys should move to a neighbouring place, in which move we two boys, not yet arrived at puberty, (took part) together with the rest, but were sent for another purpose,[3]

[1] It is curious that in his reminiscences to Gui Sette (*Sen.* X. 2) he says nothing about this gale.

[2] "Hibernis aquilonibus haud procul Massilia naufragium passus." *Preface to F.*

[3] Not "destination," as translated by Mrs. Jerrold, *Francesco Petrarca*, p. 4.

that is, to a school of grammar. The town was Carpentras —a place which, though small, was the head of a little province (the Comtât Venaissin). You remember that period of four years," etc.

To my mind the natural inference from this passage is that the move took place at once, or very shortly after their arrival at Avignon. But in this view great difficulties are involved, which his biographers have almost entirely passed over. It leaves three—or at least two [1]—of the years of Petrarch's life unaccounted for. In the Letter to Posterity he says that he left Bologna in his twenty-second year, and that he spent three years there, four at Montpellier (whither he went direct from Carpentras [2]), and four whole years at Carpentras, which would fix his arrival at the last place in his eleventh, not in his ninth, year. The latter is the date expressly given in the Letter to Posterity, which also plainly implies that he spent some time at Avignon before the removal to Carpentras. If the families had gone to Carpentras at once, they would have soon lost the quiet which they sought, on the arrival there, eight months later, of the Pope and Curia, and they would have witnessed the riots and disturbances attending the meeting of the Conclave there in 1314. Yet Petrarch lays special stress [3] on the peace and tranquillity of their sojourn as compared with the devastation produced in the town by brigands a few years later. Either, then, the move did not take place for two or three years, or we must suppose that Petrarch in his old age forgot the short Papal residence (about ten months, May, 1313, to March, 1314), and the turmoil of the succeeding Conclave. In the latter case there must have been a considerable interval at Avignon before he went to Montpellier, if the "four years" are to be taken literally. But he would be more likely to go to a school like that at Carpentras in his eleventh than in his ninth year; and the Letter to Posterity speaks plainly of his attending another school at Avignon. There is a third alternative, *viz.* that there were two periods of residence at Carpentras with an interval of about two years between them

[1] Two, if we adopt Lo Parco's dates (1314–15) for the Carpentras time. But see Excursus III. to this volume.

[2] In *Ep. Post.* he says that he went to Montpellier "inde"—that is, from Carpentras.

[3] *Sen.* X. 2.

—the first of six or eight months from October, 1312, to the spring of 1313, when the boys were too young to go to school, the second four years from the summer of 1315 to the summer of 1319; and that Petrarch (in *Sen.* X. 2) has confused these two periods, referring only to the second as a time of security and peace. I incline with some hesitation to the last solution.[1]

Petrarch has preserved one more recollection of his childhood, which is of a rather ludicrous kind. In the fourth book of his *Rerum Memorandarum* [2] he says that when he was in France in his seventh year [3] some friends of his parents sent them a picture of a "prodigy" which had recently been born at some country place near Florence. "It" was a boy with two heads and four arms and a double body as far as the waist, below which it was single and had but two legs—in short, it was a kind of Siamese twin, but much more remarkable. This "monster" only lived for twenty days. When the neighbours crowded in to see the picture, the child naturally asked to look at it and his father consented, warning him with a pinch of the ear that he must remember it and tell his own children about it. In obedience to this admonition he inserted the description of it in his book. He adds that an effigy of the "monster" was carved on the stairs of the hospital at Florence with an inscription of twenty-two indifferent elegiacs, which he gives in full. It is hardly likely that he copied these lines in his childhood and afterwards preserved them; we must rather suppose that he took them down when he visited Florence in his manhood, which was not till 1350. According to Kirner [4] the books on "Memorable Things" were written before that date—about 1344 or 1345; but since the work is incomplete, he may have added the lines in his later years.

[1] Its chief merit is that it reconciles the rather conflicting statements of *Ep. Post.* and *Sen.* X. 2.

[2] *Rer. Mem.* IV. § 9, De Portentis.

[3] An impossible combination of place and time. He could not have been in France before July 20, 1311.

[4] G. Kirner, *Sulle opere storiche di F. Petrarca*, 1890, in *Annali di R. Scuola normale di Pisa, Filos. e Filol. VII.*

CHAPTER III

I. THE PAPACY AT AVIGNON

AT the close of the first chapter we left the Papacy—sorely shaken, indeed, after its wanton conflict with Transalpine despotism and with the rising spirit of nationality, but still seated in the heart of Italy within the borders of the Pontifical State; in the second we found it established in an ancient, but comparatively unimportant, town on the banks of the Rhone. We must now retrace our steps in order to inquire how this great change came to pass. Without a careful study of the reign of Clement V. the Francophil policy of his successors, which Petrarch abhorred, becomes unintelligible.

The conciliatory measures of Benedict XI. had failed to disarm the vengeance of Philip the Fair against the policy and reputation of Boniface. The King was determined to justify his allegations against the late Pope's character before a General Council; and he naturally hoped that the effect of his success, of which he was confident, would be to limit the exorbitant pretensions of the Papacy. A Papal historian has [1] remarked that Philip was more a man of the nineteenth than of the fourteenth century, since he had no settled principles or convictions. It is a comprehensive indictment of modern times, but if it merely means that the King was remorseless in his hatreds and unscrupulous in his means of gratifying them, all ages might surely furnish parallels in plenty. He had succeeded, after the death of Boniface, in creating a French faction in the ranks of the cardinals; and he was prepared to go to any length to secure a Pope who should be complaisant to his views.

The Conclave, which met at Perugia within a fortnight of Petrarch's birth, consisted of nineteen cardinals; and the two parties of Bonifacians and Anti-Bonifacians were so evenly balanced that nine months wore away, and they were as far as

[1] L'Abbé J. F. André, *Histoire de la Papaute à Avignon*, p. 41.

ever from making a choice. At length the people of Perugia lost patience. According to a contemporary, they unroofed the house where the cardinals were assembled, and threatened to cut off their provisions. Some have represented this rising as an attempt on Philip's part to overawe the Conclave. But in the same month of April three envoys from Paris arrived at the gates and were refused admittance by the town authorities, until they protested that the object of their mission was to hasten the election. Yet Philip had for some time been using indirect means to accomplish his aims. The two Colonna cardinals, though not yet reinstated in their dignity, were working in his interest on the spot, and found, as a chronicler neatly puts it, that "the persuasion of gold was very efficacious." [1] By these means the balance had already been turned, when the Cardinal Niccolo da Prato, who with Napoleon Orsini led the French faction, remarked to Gaetani,[2] the leader of the Bonifacians, that they were all doing sore wrong to Christendom. At the same time he proposed that Gaetani's party should name three northern prelates who were not of the Sacred College, and that from these his own party should a few weeks later make a final selection. The hint was taken and the names produced—among them being, as Da Prato expected, that of Raymond de Goth (or d'Agout), Archbishop of Bordeaux.

This Gascon prelate was not directly a subject of the King of France, but of the King of England—a circumstance which had perhaps given him courage to support Boniface, who had raised him to his present rank, against the masterful Philip. He had even ventured, though in disguise, to pass through the latter's dominions in order to attend the Council at Rome in November, 1302,[3] from which issued, apparently with his full concurrence, the famous Bull "*Unam Sanctam*." He had refused all countenance to the French measures against Boniface; and at the moment he was known to be on bad terms with Charles of Valois. Surely no man was less likely than he to be a servile instrument of Philip. But the Bonifacians were unaware—or they forgot—that the King of France in his younger days had been on familiar terms with the Archbishop; he had then taken his measure, and

[1] "Multum valet aurea persuasio." Ferreto of Vicenza, in Muratori (*Ret. It. Script.* p. 1014).

[2] Nephew of Boniface, by whom he was appointed cardinal.

[3] See Chap. I. p. 15.

knew that his ruling motive was ambition. The six weeks' interval for which Da Prato had stipulated gave Philip time to apply pressure, and there can be little doubt that in some form or other the pressure was not lacking.

Villani, who supplies the above particulars of the Conclave, adds that on a particular day—May 14, 1305—the King met the Archbishop by appointment in the forest of St. Jean d'Angély, and promised that he should be elected Pope, if he would swear on the Host to comply with six conditions—five specified and one mysteriously reserved. Of the five specified there was only one—the condemnation of the memory of Boniface—on which the Archbishop would feel scruples of conscience ; and he might be disposed to argue that on this point the King had appealed to a General Council, with which the ultimate responsibility would rest. The various conjectures as to the sixth condition—that it was the Imperial crown for Charles of Valois, or the abolition of the Order of Templars, or the transference of the Popedom to the north of the Alps—are evidently guesses based on the events of the subsequent pontificate. Indeed, the same may be said of the rest of the story, which has now been discredited by positive proof that neither Philip nor Raymond was within seventy miles of the place of meeting on the day named. As so often happens, the inventor has unmasked himself by condescending to minute particulars of time and place.

But it does not follow that the account given by Villani of the proceedings of the Conclave is equally without foundation. He is far more to be trusted on what happened in Italy than on a supposed secret compact concluded in France. The supreme difficulty was to induce any members of the Bonifacian party to consent to the nomination of a native of France ; and the recent view,[1] which represents the French party as openly espousing Raymond's cause and canvassing for his success, exhibits them as laying their cards upon the table. Villani does not tell us the names of the other two prelates put forward by the Bonifacians ; but it is unlikely that they were subjects of Philip ; and Raymond may have owed his inclusion entirely to his known Bonifacian sympathies. For that reason the supporters of Boniface regarded his selection by their opponents as improbable ; and the cue

[1] See Mollat, *Les Papes d'Avignon* (1912), p. 30, who quotes only from Lizerand, *Clement V. et Philippe le Bel* (1910), pp. 12–42.

of the latter party was to keep this delusion alive till the last moment. Secret tidings of the new development were at once sent to Philip; and he had sufficient time, without any actual meeting, to apprise the astonished Archbishop of the conditions of his support, and to receive their acceptance. Those conditions were probably not as specific as Villani represents; but it is practically certain that they included a pledge that, if elected, he would not set out for Italy, at least for a long term of years. Such a promise, given in writing, would be producible if it were broken; and the mere threat of producing it would be enough to ensure its observance. We need not suppose that any definite place of residence was part of the bargain. Philip knew that his old friend would remain within reach of his influence, even if not actually in his dominions. The result of these negotiations was the unanimous election of the Archbishop of Bordeaux at Perugia on June 5, 1305.

The new Pope was engaged in the visitation of his diocese when the news of his election reached him on the 21st at Lusignan. He at once returned to Bordeaux, where he received the envoys of the Conclave on July 22, and took the name of Clement V. Along with the instrument of his election, the cardinals sent a special letter entreating him to repair at once to Italy, where "the bark of Peter was labouring in the storm," and where—with some inconsistency—they promised him a "secure retreat and profound tranquillity." It is not recorded whether he gave any immediate reply.[1] But soon afterwards he informed them, to their consternation, that he intended to be crowned at Lyons, and requested them to proceed thither with the insignia necessary for the ceremony. No wonder the old Cardinal Matteo Rosso d'Orsini, who had attended twelve Conclaves, uttered the sombre prophecy—"It will be long before we see the face of another Pope."

The Imperial city of Lyons, though subject to French influence, had not yet been finally incorporated in the realm; but it was probably at Philip's request that Clement transferred the scene of his coronation to that city from the place of his first choice,

[1] The statement in Mollat (p. 32, taken from a German work) that Clement announced his intention of going to Italy as soon as a final peace was concluded between France and England, must be a mistake. Such a peace had been made two years before, when Philip resigned Guienne.

which had been Vienne in the territory of the Dauphinate. On September 4 Clement left Bordeaux, and made a leisurely but magnificent progress through Languedoc and Provence, arriving at Lyons early in November. On the 14th of that month he was crowned by one of the Orsini cardinals [1] in the Church of Saint Just in the presence of Philip and of the Kings of Aragon and Majorca. The fine church in which the coronation took place, and which had once been the cathedral, was destroyed in the sixteenth century. In 1305, as at present, the cathedral was the Church of St. John; and thither, after the first ceremony, the Pope was to ride in procession for the further ceremony of the "possessio," as was the custom in Rome from St. Peter's to the Lateran. On Clement mounting his palfrey, the bridle was at first held by Philip, who then resigned it successively to his brother and the Duke of Brittany. As the cavalcade descended the steep hill of Gourgaillon, an old wall at the side, which was crowded with spectators, gave way and fell upon the procession. The Pope was flung from his horse, and his tiara, from which a priceless ruby disappeared, was rolled in the mud; but he himself escaped almost uninjured, as did the King of France. The Duke of Brittany, with the Pope's brother, and, according to some, the cardinal who had performed the ceremony, were killed; while Charles of Valois and many others were seriously wounded. The superstitious, especially among the Italians, naturally regarded the accident as a judgment upon the Pope for forsaking Rome; and an affray next day between French and Italian servants, in which other lives were lost, confirmed them in this belief.

At Lyons in the next two months there were many conferences between the Pope and the King, and of the issue the world was not long left in doubt. Clement confirmed the full absolution already granted to Philip by Benedict XI. He also annulled the Bull of Boniface on the immunity of the clergy from taxation ("*Clericis Laicos*").[2] With regard to the more important Bull "*Unam Sanctam*," to which he had himself assented, he declared that it carried no prejudice to the crown of France, which was

[1] Mollat (*op. cit.* p. 32) says it was Napoleon Orsini, who had succeeded his aged relative Matteo Rosso as dean of the Sacred College. But most writers name the other as the officiant, and some assert that he was killed in the accident.

[2] See Chap. I. p. 11.

no more (he did not add " no less ") in subjection to the Papacy after it than it was before it.[1] He also restored the two Colonna cardinals to all their honours, and permitted Stefano Colonna to rebuild Palestrina from its ruins. For the other Italian cardinals he had no crumb of comfort. Some say [2] he told them that he should never reside in Italy on account of the incessant strife of the Guelfs and Ghibellines, and the disorderly state of Rome. He was content merely to designate three cardinals as his legates in the peninsula; and in his first consistory on December 15, he finally showed his hand by creating ten cardinals, of whom nine were French—mainly Gascons and Limousins—and one English. The absence of a single Italian plainly demonstrated his intention of creating and maintaining a French majority in the College.

In palliation of his conduct his apologists urge that no French Pope would have been safe in Rome, and that Clement desired to purge the Sacred College of the taint of Italian party spirit. Such a defence ignores two patent facts of the situation; first that Clement, by the deliberate policy of recent Popes, was now a temporal sovereign in Italy, and therefore morally bound to have a special care for Italian affairs; and secondly, that his authority was in far greater danger from the overweening power of Philip than from the lawlessness of Italian nobles. To put himself in Philip's power, or even within the range of his influence, was to abdicate the position of independence, which his predecessors had striven so hard to win. It would almost seem as if Clement, inverting the theory of modern Papalists, held that a state of temporal dependence was best suited to the exercise of his spiritual power.

It scarcely falls within the scope of this work to give a minute history of his pontificate; but in order to understand how the Papacy began its " Babylonish captivity," we must clearly appreciate the character of the Pope who was chiefly responsible for it. That character has been very variously judged. From

[1] The Abbé Christophe (*Histoire de la Papauté à Avignon*, I. 190) says that this Bull could not be rescinded because it contained a doctrinal definition. Clement's declaration is not unlike the argument still employed about the forged " Decretals "—*viz.* that the supremacy of the Pope was just the same before their use (in order to prove it) by Nicholas I. as it was after that time.

[2] Joudou (*op. cit.* p. 30). He cites Platina (*Vit. Clem. V.*), who, however, makes no such statement.

the French side we are warned to disregard the Italian estimate as altogether too prejudiced. But when it is added that "Clement was the Pope for the situation," [1] that he "yielded no essential point to Philip," [2] and that he was "averse from persecution," [3] we must conclude that the prejudice is not all on one side. In the *Commedia* he appears (by way of prophecy) as "the Gascon," [4] "the whore who dallied with the giant" (Philip),[5] and the "lawless pastor from the West," [6] who obtained his office by bribes and for whom a special niche is reserved in the Circle of the Simoniacs in Hell. The contrast is supremely striking; and if we grant that Dante reflects the contemporary Italian view, we must note also that the chief defenders of Clement are to be found among modern Church historians. In his lifetime he seems scarcely to have had a friend, except among the relatives and court-minions whom he enriched.

Clement became Pope at the early age of forty-one; and intellectually he was not unfit for his high position. He studied in Arts at Toulouse and in Canon Law at Bologna; as Pope, he founded two Universities, at Orleans and Perugia, and added a supplementary volume (the 7th), which is called the "Clementines," to the "Decretals" of Gratian. He did not despise art; for he built the fine crypt to his first cathedral at Comminges, and he invited Giotto to paint at Avignon. His weakness was on the moral side. A beautiful relative, the Countess de Talleyrand-Périgord, on whom he lavished money and gifts, is said to have been his mistress; and his nepotism, even in those days of laxity, became a public scandal. In money matters he was both rapacious and profuse; his fondness for show and for gorgeous ceremonies led him to increase the Papal revenue by extending the number of benefices "reserved" to the Holy See. Yet he spent barely half his annual income; and of his fortune of over a million florins he bequeathed only 70,000 to his successor. Some say that he was affable in manner,

[1] The Abbé Fuzet (*op. cit.*), p. xiii.

[2] Boutaric, *Clement V., Philippe le Bel, et les Templiers.*

[3] T. Okey, *Avignon* (Mediæval Towns), p. 52. Apart from the Templar tortures, to which he was at least a consenting party, Clement sanctioned the hideous cruelties towards Fra Dolcino and his followers (1307), which were not inflicted for other crimes, since recantation of their heresy would have saved them.

[4] *Par.* XVII. 82.

[5] *Purg.* XXXII. 148–156.

[6] *Inf.* XIX. 82–84.

and especially complaisant to those of high rank; but towards the end of his reign, perhaps from constant ill-health, he became taciturn and morose, seldom calling the cardinals into consultation and living the life of a recluse. To the same cause may have been due the extreme restlessness which kept him constantly on the move; he seemed to have incurred the curse of Cain—"a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be upon the face of the earth."

As a diplomatist he was not devoid of a certain supple astuteness; indeed, Muratori calls him the "fox-like Pope." [1] Yet his successes, such as they were, were obtained by consummate duplicity; and the credit of them belongs rather to his adroit adviser, the Cardinal da Prato, than to himself. His policy, as a whole, was feeble and wavering; and in his dealings with France in particular, he gives the impression of a lack of personal courage.[2] The formidable Philip played with him as a cat with a mouse. In the interview of January, 1306, at Lyons, he found Clement—so complaisant in general—unwilling to gratify his spite against Boniface or to grant absolution to the swashbucklers of Anagni. For the moment Philip relaxed his grasp, and allowed the Pope to retire to Bordeaux, where he was attacked with severe illness. On his recovery next year the King drew him irresistibly into his own dominions—not to Tours, as at first proposed, but to Poitiers; and there on June 1, 1307, the required absolution was given. It was mainly unconditional; on Nogaret alone was imposed the light penance of going on Crusade within the next five years.

The Pope had been trying to distract the King's attention by the project of a general Crusade; he still dangled before the ambitious Charles of Valois [3] the distant prospect of becoming Emperor of the East. But the age of crusades was past; and now the situation was complicated by fresh demands. Philip, on his arrival at Poitiers, insisted that Boniface should be condemned as a heretic, his name erased from the Papal records,

[1] *Il volpino Pontefice, Annali d'Italia*, VIII. 64.

[2] This trait in his character is illustrated by an incident at the Council of Vienne. Three poor Templars appeared unexpectedly to plead the cause of their Order. Clement had them put in irons, doubled his personal guards and sent a letter of warning to Philip.

[3] He was the husband of Catherine Courtenay, who had shadowy claims to the "Latin" throne. The Greek Emperor was, as usual, under Papal sentence of excommunication.

and his ashes cast to the winds. The consternation of the Curia was extreme; such a proceeding would be fatal to the prestige, nay even to the good name, of the Holy See. Clement was in a terrible strait; and, according to one biographer,[1] he tried to escape from the royal claws disguised and under a false name, but was recognized and brought back with respectful force. By the wise advice of the Cardinal da Prato he resolved at all costs to gain time. He therefore represented to Philip that such a matter could only be decided by a General Council—to which the King himself appealed in 1303—and promised that such a Council should meet at Vienne in 1310. The King consented to the delay with reluctance, and insisted that the charges against the dead Pope should be previously heard by the Pope in Council.

Meanwhile he had set his heart on another project—the destruction, for alleged unspeakable crimes and blasphemies, of the knightly Order of Templars. These knights, being "ecclesiastical persons," could only be tried and condemned by the officers of the Church. The Pope promised a strict inquiry; but Philip, distrusting the "long delays" of the Curia, concerted with the inquisitor-general the secret arrest and imprisonment of all the French knights. On October 13, 1307, Clement protested vehemently against the precipitance of his own officer whom he dismissed, and appointed two French cardinals to hear and report upon the charges against the knights. But in the meantime, under the most shameful tortures in the King's dungeons, a large majority confessed their guilt; and the vacillating Pope professed to be much moved by these awful revelations. Within a month of his protest he issued orders for the apprehension of the Templars in the other countries of Christendom. Satisfied with this official justification of his conduct, the King resigned to the Church the custody of some of the Templars; and the immediate consequence was their retractation of their confessions and the reservation of their case by the Pope for his own decision. So the matter stood in February, 1308, and for the moment the King seemed to have been foiled. He at once resumed the intimidation of his august "prisoner." Pamphlets were issued, which encouraged men to talk freely of Clement's nepotism, his exactions from the clergy and his scandalous maladministration

[1] John, Canon of St. Victor, *Vit. Clem. V.* The modern historians, with the exception of Joudou, refuse to credit the story.

of the Church. In May, in the presence of Philip, the States-General at Tours clamoured for the condemnation of the Templars; and at Whitsuntide (June 2) the King proceeded thence for a second interview with the Pope at Poitiers. According to some authorities, he was accompanied by Charles of Valois with 6000 men-at-arms.

But just before this visit a tragic event became known, which profoundly influenced the conduct of both parties. On May 1 the Emperor Albert of Hapsburg was treacherously assassinated by his nephew on the banks of the Reuss. It was one of the objects of the King's visit—perhaps also of his show of military force, for he knew his man—to obtain the Pope's support for his brother Charles as candidate for the vacant throne. He knew that, without such support, the prince would stand little or no chance. Therefore, while willing to overawe the Pope, he did not desire to drive him to extremities. On the other hand, the proposal placed the Papacy—and indeed the liberties of Europe, above all of Italy—in the direst peril. The Pope himself was virtually in the custody of the King of France; the daughter of the latter was consort of the King of England. A French prince, through the mistaken policy of former Popes, ruled the southern part of the peninsula; and the northern part was, at least in theory, the feudal appanage of the Empire. If a Valois were to become Emperor, the Papacy would be crushed as in a vice—the very result which the Popes of the previous century had dreaded from the House of Hohenstaufen. Clement had now been for fourteen months at Poitiers in a gilded captivity. If he was to regain his freedom of action, he must temporize; he must stoop to dissimulation, if not to absolute falsehood.

Accordingly, while he feigned to lend a favourable ear to the candidature of Charles and even wrote letters to recommend him publicly to the Electors, he was taking strong secret measures to prevent his success. By the Cardinal da Prato's advice, he sent express couriers to the Archbishops of Mayence and Trèves urging them to do all in their power to promote the election of Henry of Luxemburg—a poor, but brave and chivalrous prince, who had recently visited him at Poitiers. The election could not take place for some months, which was really to his advantage; and, in the meantime, he must endeavour first to pacify, and then to elude, the King of France. In both these objects he succeeded,

perhaps beyond his expectations. At first he maintained that both the persons and the goods of the Templars must be made over to the Church, and that the Order, which had been founded by Papal sanction, could only be dissolved by his authority. But on the first point he soon yielded—impelled, it was said, by the terrible confessions of seventy-two Templars, who were sent to him at Poitiers. He appointed a Papal Commission to inquire into their guilt at Paris; and, meanwhile, they were to be maintained in the King's prisons at their own charges. The fate of the Order was to be decided in 1310 at the Council of Vienne. During these negotiations Philip attempted, no doubt as a means of pressure, to reopen the question of the condemnation of Boniface. The Pope was obliged, much against his will, to fix the Candlemas of the following year (1309) for the hearing of the witnesses, though in fact it did not take place till thirteen months later.

As soon as possible after the King's departure—the date seems to have been August—Clement took measures to escape from his "honourable" confinement. He had decided, on the advice of the cardinals, to remove his residence to Avignon—just over the French border in the Provençal dominions of the King of Naples, and close to the small Comtât Venaissin, which since 1275—nominally indeed since 1228—had been a Papal possession. At first, dispensing with the attendance of his cardinals, he retired with a few attendants to Bordeaux, where he received news of the election of Henry of Luxemburg on November 27. Thence he moved to Toulouse for Christmas; and after four months' wandering through Carcassonne, Montpellier, Narbonne and Nîmes, he passed into Avignon by the bridge of St. Benezet—of which a portion is still standing—towards the end of April, 1309.[1] He was met by a concourse of the inhabitants at the foot of the ramparts, and the magistrates tendered their homage. François de Maynier, the head of the University founded only six years before by Boniface VIII., delivered an address of welcome. The Pope found a modest lodging in the Dominican Convent in the south-western quarter near the river.

[1] Joudou (*op. cit.* i. p. 52) gives the date March 28, and quotes a letter from Clement dated Avignon, April 24. I have followed the dates in Christophe (I. pp. 214, 215), according to which Clement was at Narbonne at the end of March.

The city, where the Papacy was now to be seated for nearly seventy years (with two short intervals), had had a long and chequered history. It was once the principal town of a Gaulish tribe, and in the second century had been raised by the Romans to the rank of a " colony " or settlement of retired veterans. At the fall of the Western Empire it was successively occupied by the Visigoths and the Burgundians ; and in the eighth century it was twice stormed by the Saracens, who were expelled from it by Charles Martel. A century later it belonged to the short-lived kingdom of Arles, which rose from the ruins of the Carlovingian Empire. In the eleventh century, when the Emperor was again its titular lord, Avignon had become a republic, independent in all but name ; and this was perhaps the reason why those powerful neighbours, the Counts of Provence and Toulouse, were content to share (instead of fighting for them) their shadowy feudal rights over the city. In the Albigensian War the inhabitants espoused the cause of the Count of Toulouse, and sustained a siege of three months in 1226 from a French army acting under the orders of the Cardinal-Legate of St. Angelo. By a humiliating treaty in the following year, they were compelled to demolish their strong walls and a large number of their houses and to pay a heavy indemnity. Though not wholly deprived of its liberties, the city had never recovered its former prosperity. The old gaiety of the Troubadour days had been superseded by the stern courts of the Inquisition and by the sway of a new French master. Still, the authority of the Angevin monarchs of Naples, who had inherited the rights of the two southern counts, was little more than nominal.

It was a strange freak of fortune that had now brought the Pope himself—almost a fugitive, and with his glory much bedimmed—within the gates of the town which his predecessors had ruined. Yet there is reason to doubt whether Clement really intended to make it his permanent residence, for which it seemed little adapted. The streets were narrow, muddy and insanitary ; an envoy from Aragon is said to have fallen ill from the fœtid smells. Fortunately high winds were frequent, for, without this disagreeable feature of the climate, the town would have been scarcely habitable.[1] The houses were for the most part unpretentious and badly built ; few of them rose to a second storey.

[1] Hence the proverb : " *Avenio, cum vento fastidiosa, sine vento venenosa.*"

The cardinals could not find accommodation suited to their dignity. Many of them retired to Orange, where their names or escutcheons may still be seen on some of the houses; in later days some were lodged in the French town of Villeneuve across the Rhone. Next year (1310) Clement himself, whether for reasons of health or from fear of Philip, retreated into his own dominions of the Comtât Venaissin, where he built a château at Groseau, near Malaucéne, and spent months of every year in close retirement. Yet some kind of headquarters for the Curia must have been imperative. An itinerant Papacy was neither desirable nor feasible; and it is a mystery how a Court, which professed to be guided by written precedent, and whose messengers were continually passing into all parts of Christendom, could have remained so long without a fixed home.

Less than a month after his arrival the Pope heard of the decease of Charles the Lame, King of Naples—the sovereign in whose dominions he had found refuge. Clement had sanctioned the arrangement, first made by Charles in conjunction with Pope Boniface, that the direct heir Carobert, who was now King of Hungary, should be passed over in favour of his uncle Robert, only twelve years his senior. Robert had for some years been the acting head of the Guelf party in Italy; and he must have been well aware, from the exultation of the Ghibellines at the election of Henry of Luxemburg, that the latter's journey to Rome for his coronation, with the Pope's sanction, would cause fresh turmoil in the peninusla. He therefore set out with all speed, in company with his queen Sancia, for Avignon, where he did homage to Clement for the Papal "fief" of Naples on August 28 and was crowned by the Pontiff in the cathedral on September 8. He remained in his county of Provence for eight months, till May, 1310; and it may be presumed that he had frequent discussions with his liege—now also his guest, and, in a sense, his subject—with regard to Italian affairs and the coming of the new Emperor. Clement had already, in confirming Henry's election, consented to his Italian expedition; and he was doubtless disposed to think highly of one whose choice had delivered him from great peril. But the Pope, even more than Robert, was traditionally the supporter of the Guelf party; and his absence from Italy might give occasion for Imperial encroachments upon the rights of the Church. His policy seemed to be

to play off Robert against Henry, and to take care, above all, that no war should break out between them. It was a game which was bound in course of time to involve treachery towards one of the two potentates, unless all parties in Italy were to lay aside their rivalry and consent to a universal truce. Of this, however, there could not be the faintest hope; and Clement's recent truculence towards the two chief Italian republics gave him no right to expect it.

The angry Bull which he had directed this spring against Venice for her attack upon Ferrara, with its open invitation to all Christian States to confiscate Venetian property, had been followed by a defeat which foiled the ambition of the Republic; but the unscrupulous terms of the decree had aroused keen resentment. For two years Florence had lain under an interdict for disregarding the Pope's orders to refrain from attacking the Bianchi. And although the "repentant sinner"—after achieving her object—had just been restored to "the bosom of the Church," the suspicion rankled in her mind that she might, after all, be betrayed. This feeling was increased by the exaggerated terms of the Papal letters exhorting the Italian exiles to receive Henry with open arms. He is described as "the royal peacemaker who comes in his gentle majesty to dissipate every evil." No doubt Henry at first attempted, with generous chivalry, to act up to this high character; but as we have seen, his military weakness, combined with the obstinate hostility of Florence and Naples, doomed him to utter failure. But while the issue hung in the balance, Clement neglected no measure to strengthen his rival. In 1310 he made Robert Vicar-General for the Church in the Romagna and cancelled an enormous debt which had long been due from Naples to the Holy See. He was confident that the new king, with the full coffers of Florence behind him, would hold his own, if the Emperor inclined too openly to the Ghibelline side. When the coronation ceremony was over, Clement's chief concern was to get Henry out of Italy as soon as possible. This was the explanation of the humiliating terms imposed upon him at Tivoli, which forbad him to make war upon the Pope's vassal, and required him to evacuate the States of the Church forthwith and not to return without express permission. Such an ultimatum, which would never have been addressed to him if in command of a large force, exposed both his person and his office to ridicule;

yet it came from the Pontiff, who for his own ends, had compassed his election and encouraged his schemes. We cannot wonder that Dante, who about this time composed his *De Monarchiâ* to assert the Emperor's independence of the Pope in temporal matters, execrated the French Pope for his perfidy.

Clement would probably not have taken such a high tone in favour of Robert but for the fear of offending his relative, the King of France.[1] During the three previous years (1309–1312) he had managed, by sacrificing the Templars, first to delay, and then to defeat, Philip's plan for the condemnation of Pope Boniface. It is true that, in treading this thorny path, Clement had many humiliations to undergo. When Philip heard of Henry's election to the Empire and of the double part which the Pope had played, he showed his indignation by pressing Clement upon his tenderest point. The King wrote to the Pope in the most peremptory terms, alleging that the delay in the process against Boniface was becoming a scandal to Christendom, and insisting that it be heard forthwith or the chief witnesses might die before their evidence was taken. One of them, Raynald di Supino, had entered a public protest at Nîmes against an ambush prepared for him by the Bonifacians near Avignon, into which he had nearly fallen; and to this incident Philip alludes in the most pointed way. The Pope could only reply humbly that no witnesses had been intimidated by personal violence, and that the process was taking its normal course. He asserted that he was himself under duress from the Bonifacians, who had introduced foreign soldiers into Avignon and threatened to carry him off to Rome if he did not abandon the hearing of the cause. We may suspect that this threat of resorting to Italy was a ruse, by which Clement hoped to relieve himself of further persecution. It was not without success; for when the Pope summoned by Bull the King and his three brothers to appear as prosecutors, they declined to come in person, and he warmly approved their decision. At length, on March 16, 1310, William of Nogaret and four others appeared in Avignon to prosecute before the Pope in full consistory. The proceedings were held in secret during

[1] I find no confirmation of the story related by Bossi (*Istoria d'Italia*, XV. p. 560) that Clement was preparing to excommunicate Robert, but was turned from his purpose by an attack of Philip's soldiers upon the Papal Chancery, in which they tore up many papers and threatened further violence.

the two following months, but minutes of the evidence against Boniface have been preserved.[1] The Pope availed himself of every pretext for delay. An attack of bleeding from his nose abruptly terminated the first session. At a later stage, after hearing some oral evidence, he decided that the bulk of it should be submitted to him in writing. But, on further pressure from the King, more witnesses were heard at Groseau during the heat of the summer.

When the court returned in the autumn to Avignon, Clement began to pluck up courage. He refused to intervene on the King's side in his negotiations with the Flemings. Rumours were spread that, with the aid of the Emperor and King Robert, he intended to revive in the latter's favour the ancient kingdom of Arles. Philip took alarm, and having obtained the Pope's promise that the Order of Templars should be abolished at the Council of Vienne, he consented that Clement should be left absolutely free to adjudicate in the case against the deceased Pope. On April 27, 1311, several Bulls were issued, which, it was hoped, would terminate the whole affair. Boniface was declared a legitimate Pope and held innocent of the charges brought against him; but his chief accuser was lauded to the skies as one who had been compelled to investigate charges made by others, and had been actuated only by zeal for truth and good morals. Thereupon the Pope proceeds not only to acquit him of all blame, but to make null and void all decrees and acts of his predecessor against the realm of France and even to have them expunged from the Papal archives. A complete amnesty was granted even to the freebooters of Anagni, except fifteen persons, of whom one, William of Nogaret, was absolved on performance of a light penance. It has been truly said that these Bulls "broke for ever the spell of Pontifical autocracy."[2] The proceedings of 1303 and the citation of a living Pope upon monstrous charges before a General Council were all declared unworthy of censure; and indirectly at least, blame was imputed to Boniface for his policy towards France. The humiliation of the Papacy could scarcely have been more complete; and the sole consolation of the champions of its highest claims was that the case had been

[1] An excellent account of it will be found in Milman's *Latin Christianity*, Vol. VII. pp. 285–295.

[2] Milman (*op. cit.*), VII. 295.

removed from the decision of a General Council. When that Council at length assembled at Vienne on October 13, 1311, the question of the Templars came up for final consideration. Even on this subject Clement had had to submit to severe mortification. While his Papal Commission was sitting at Paris in the previous year (May 12, 1310), fifty-four Templars, who had retracted their confessions, had been burnt alive outside the gates by the authority of the Archbishop of Sens, a mere creature of the King. This high-handed act was met by the feeblest protest on the part of the Commission, and it had since been repeated in other provinces of Philip's realm. The appearance of some Templars at the Council to defend their Order excited the Pope's alarm, and they were at once imprisoned by his direction. But the prevalent opinion of the three hundred bishops assembled was that the Order should have a full opportunity of defence before the Council. This was exactly what Clement was most anxious to prevent ; for there was a good deal of sympathy for the Order, and none could tell how the Council might decide. Its sessions were therefore adjourned for some months. When it reassembled in February, 1312, the King of France was present with a large number of his armed nobles. He was determined not to be baulked a second time of his prey ; and he threatened to reopen the process against Boniface, if the Templars were not condemned. It was therefore determined in a consistory, to which some of the bishops were invited, that the Pope should decree *proprio motu* the abolition of the Order ; the Council would then be forced to acquiesce. A Bull was read in the session of April 3, abolishing the Order " by way of provision, not of condemnation," and reserving to the Pope the disposal of the Templars' persons and estates. The reservation was somewhat belated, as many had been burnt alive, and Philip had laid hands long before on a large proportion of the property. The remnant of the latter was bestowed upon the Knights Hospitallers, who gained little, if at all, by the transaction.

Modern historians have shown grave reason to doubt the guilt of the Templars as an Order, though individual members of it may have lapsed into Oriental vice and scepticism. In Spain, Germany and most parts of Italy, they were unreservedly acquitted. But the detestable method of examination by torture left the French Templars only the choice between confession and

incineration at the stake. Confessions obtained by such means lose all their value; and the attempt to show that the Templars were the precursors in free thought of the Continental Free Masons has lamentably failed. The suppression of the Jesuits more than four centuries later has often been adduced as a parallel; but though the Order of Loyola fell in consequence of pressure from the civil power, the soundness of its faith and morals was never seriously in dispute. A recent writer,[1] who disbelieves the worst charges against the Templars, makes much of the fact that Clement did not condemn, but only suppressed the Order. No doubt, if he considered them guilty, this course might be defended as a means of avoiding scandal; but, if he believed them innocent, it was a flagrant denial of justice—forced upon him, as we can hardly doubt, by the necessity of satisfying Philip. Villani—a contemporary, but with Italian prejudices—says roundly[2]: "The Pope abandoned the Order to the King of France that he might avert, if possible, the condemnation of Boniface." But he could not prevent the introduction of the latter topic. The question of the charges against Boniface was raised towards the end of the Council. Three learned cardinals announced their intention of defending his memory, and two Spanish knights defied his accusers to take up their gage of battle. No one answered the challenge; and the affair was considered closed by the reiterated exculpation of Philip and his realm from all censure.

On May 6, 1312—the day before Henry VII. fought his way across the Tiber—the Council broke up after three inglorious sessions; the only result of importance was the abolition of the Order of Templars, which was not the Council's own act. A few of the more prominent Templars, including Jacques du Molay, Grand Master of the Order, still languished in the King's prisons; and it was not till December 22, 1313,[3] that Clement delegated to three cardinals the duty of pronouncing the final sentence upon these men. That sentence was read before Nôtre Dame on March 18, 1314, condemning them to perpetual imprisonment; but the Grand Master, who was present, vehemently asserted

[1] Mollat (*op. cit.*), p. 254.

[2] Villani's Chronicle VIII. c. 92.

[3] Joudou and Milman wrongly date the sentence of the cardinals and the punishment of Du Molay in March, 1313; the Register of Clement is conclusive for the dates given (Mollat, p. 249). This does not, of course, authenticate the prophecy; it merely accounts for its invention, if false.

the innocence of the Order, while taking blame to himself and others for having abandoned it in order to save their own lives. Philip took instant measures to punish them for this bold avowal. On that same evening, in the Jews' island on the Seine, Du Molay and a comrade were tied to two stakes in the presence of the King and burnt alive. It was asserted that the Grand Master, in his last moments, summoned his " unjust judge " Clement to the eternal tribunal within forty days, and the King of France within a year.

If this prophecy were ever uttered, it may have been with the knowledge that the Pope was mortally ill. Since the close of the Council of Vienne his health had been rapidly failing ; the disease is said to have been an internal cancer, either in the stomach or bowels. He appears to have remained in Avignon during the winter of 1312–13, for he assisted at the solemn mass for the canonization of Pope Celestine V., which took place, in fulfilment of an old promise to Philip, in the cathedral on May 5, 1313.[1] Two days later, Clement left with the cardinals for Carpentras, the capital of his little Gallic state, about fifteen miles distant, at which place (or in his neighbouring castle of Monteux at Groseau), he remained eleven months. He improved the town by supplying it with water from the neighbouring river ; but any hope that the better climate would arrest the progress of his malady was soon dissipated. Anxiety and mortification seemed to dog his footsteps everywhere. During the first part of his stay, when war seemed imminent between the Emperor and Robert, the Pope was pressed by the King of France to intervene in favour of his kinsman of Naples. Thereupon on June 12 the Pope issued a Bull excommunicating any who should presume to invade that " fief " of the Holy See. In reply Henry summoned a Council in which, while disputing the Pope's claim to Naples, he announced his intention of defending the true property of the Church, and continued his preparations for war. His sudden death at the outset of his expedition has already been

[1] It was a sort of " consolation prize " for the failure of Philip's indictment of Boniface, the persecutor of Celestine ; but they were careful to canonize the ex-pope in his pre-papal name of Pietro Morrone. Cardinal Stefaneschi says (see his poem on the ceremony in Muratori, *Rer. It. Scip.* III. 662) that the Pope's voice at the mass sounded like the scream of a peacock.

related ; it was a mortal blow to the Ghibelline interest in Italy. The Pope, as if to atone for the momentary countenance that he had given to that interest, proceeded to shower favours upon the King of Naples. In the autumn he made him Vicar-General in Italy during the vacancy in the Empire ; he also committed Ferrara to his keeping,[1] and even appointed him Senator of Rome, which was in its usual state of anarchy. In the following March (1314) he annulled by Bull the ban of the Empire, which Henry had pronounced against Robert ; and in the same instrument he made a bold and final attack upon Imperial rights. He declared that the Emperor's vow at his coronation to protect the Church was an oath of fealty ; from which it followed that the Pope, as the true ruler of the Empire, could assume its administration during a vacancy. This was, in effect, to make the Emperor the Pope's vassal ; as has been well pointed out,[2] the only further step—which was never taken—would have been to claim the right of nomination to the throne. The appearance in a Papal Bull of a theory, hitherto only vaguely asserted by such Popes as Innocent III., exalted it into a maxim of canon law ; and we cannot wonder that it was indignantly repudiated by Imperial partisans.

In contrast to these extreme pretensions we may give an instance—which, according to some, occurred in this very month —of the depth to which the credit of the Papacy had sunk in Italy. The Pope had created one of his nephews (Raymond d'Aspel) Marquis of Ancona, and had entrusted him with the task of conveying a Papal treasure, variously estimated at from 70,000 to 200,000 gold florins, from Lucca into Provence. Some leading Ghibellines of Modena, who had heard of this commission, attacked the marquis on the road and slew him, dispersing his escort of forty men and seizing the treasure. The infirm, if not dying, Pope laid an interdict upon Modena and excommunicated its citizens ; but the treasure never found its way into France.[3]

[1] It was declared to be a temporary gift to Queen Sancia ; but this manœuvre was only to disguise the fact that her husband was placed in charge of the city.

[2] Gregorovius, *Rome in the Middle Ages* (Eng. translation), Vol. VI. Pt. I. p. 95.

[3] The treasure (if it were the same treasure) was found and appropriated by the Ghibellines in June, 1314, in the Church of San Frediano

At the beginning of April, 1314, Clement determined to remove into Gascony, in the hope of deriving benefit from his native air. Too ill to mount a horse, he was carried in a litter and ferried across the Rhone to the village of Roquemaure. There he was taken to the castle of the Counts of Toulouse, where he expired on the twentieth of the month after a reign of less than nine years. His spirit had scarcely passed before his court dispersed, and his remains were neglected by all but his immediate relatives. So poor a watch was kept that one of the torches in the " chapelle ardente " was overturned, and consumed the body from the waist downwards.[1] His ashes were conveyed to Carpentras and buried in the cathedral ; but two years later, at the suit of the church and chapter of Uzeste which he had founded, they were removed to that place, where a monument was erected in the choir. This monument still exists in a defaced condition ; but it is a cenotaph, for the tomb was plundered by the Calvinists in 1577 and its contents cast to the winds. *Sic transit gloria mundi !*

On November 29 of the same year Philip the Fair, the evil genius of Clement, also passed to his account. Though he was only forty-five years of age, his constitution was worn out ; and he spent his last years in the midst of financial troubles—not relieved by his plundering of the Templars—and of domestic disgrace.[2] He still amused himself by hunting, and at last he was thrown from his horse by a wild boar running between its legs and was mortally injured, dying a few days later at Fontainebleau. He passed away in the odour of sanctity, giving wise advice to his sons, and protesting his devotion to the Church, whose chief pastors he had attacked or held in bondage, and whose property he had despoiled. He does not seem to have interfered, at least openly, in the deliberations of the stormy Conclave of this year.

That assembly met in the episcopal palace of Carpentras about May 1, 1314. It consisted of twenty-three cardinals, of

at Lucca, when they became masters of the city (Muratori, *Annali d'Italia*, VIII. p. 66).

[1] Some historians, as André and Joudou, place this accident at the time of the July riots at Carpentras. I follow the account in Christophe which is taken from the Chronicle of F. Pipin (Muratori, *Rer. It. Scrip.* IX. 750). It is surely inconceivable that the corpse can have remained so long unburied.

[2] His three daughters-in-law were all accused of unchastity.

whom a large majority—amounting to the requisite two-thirds—were Frenchmen or Gascons, through the recent appointments of the late Pope. Only seven were Italians ; but on this occasion they were not divided in their sympathies, as at Perugia, but acted as a compact and unanimous body. Their avowed aim was to restore the Papacy to Rome ; and they were willing to give their united suffrages to a Frenchman who would satisfy them on this all-important point. The poet Dante from his retreat at Verona addressed a noble letter [1] to the Italian cardinals at Carpentras, exhorting them to restore the Papacy to Rome and to strive for peace and concord, so far as was consistent with that supreme end. Unfortunately, personal rivalries apart, that object proved the very apple of discord. He seemed to recognize the fact in urging them to fight for the Spouse of Christ and for " the seat of that Spouse, which is Rome, the home of all earthly pilgrims." An extant letter of Napoleon Orsini to the King of France breathes an extreme hatred to the memory of Clement, and depicts the ruin that had been wrought by his neglect of Italy. Rome was deserted and abandoned to robbers ; the provinces were in a welter of perpetual strife ; the cathedrals —even small prebendal churches—were falling into decay.

There was no sign of this desire for the Church's welfare among the majority on the Conclave, which was rent by jealousies and conflicting personal ambitions. It has been said [2] that there were three distinct parties in the Conclave—Italians, French and Gascons ; but the last consisted of only ten cardinals—four of them Provençal—of whom some were too ambitious of their own election to co-operate with any other party. A deadlock consequently ensued, which had lasted three months when on July 24 Bertrand, a nephew of the late Pope, arrived at the head of an armed force, with the ostensible object of conducting the late Pope's remains to their final resting-place at Uzeste. Really his aim was to procure the election of one of his own relatives, or at least of a Gascon. Quarrels, and even bloodshed, had already arisen between the menials of the contending parties in the Conclave ; and the newcomers, intent on looting, joined forces with the disaffected townsmen. The little market-place was full of stalls set up by the Italian traders and merchants who had

[1] Epistle VIII.
[2] Mollat (*op. cit.*), p. 40.

followed in the wake of the Curia. These were the first mark of attack by the rioters, who were summoned at sound of trumpet by William of Budos, another nephew of Clement, acting at the time as governor of the town. From pillage the rabble proceeded to arson, and some of the houses of the Italian cardinals were set on fire. At fall of night the mob closed in upon the Conclave palace shouting, " Death to the Italian cardinals ! We will have a Pope ! " In the darkness and confusion the threatened prelates contrived to make a hole in a back wall and escape to Valence, whence they issued a dignified protest against this riotous attempt to intimidate their suffrages, and solemnly agreed to recognize no candidate elected without their concurrence. The Gascon and French cardinals retired to Avignon, equally determined not to yield ; and for nearly two years the Conclave did not meet. Such was the fury of party spirit that the situation contained all the seeds of a Great Schism, like that which rent the Church more than sixty years later.

II. SCHOOL AND HOME LIFE OF PETRARCH

During these scenes of violence Carpentras was no safe place for a peaceable Italian lawyer with women and children to protect. Petrarch is said by some [1] to have been a witness of the rioting and incendiarism which we have just described. But how, then, could he thank God in his old age for the " tranquil interval " which was granted him at Carpentras ? [2] As we have shown in the last chapter, if the two Italian mothers were compelled by lack of suitable lodgings to leave Avignon for Carpentras soon after their arrival (see the same letter to Gui Sette), they would have been still more incommoded when, a few months later, the Pope and Curia invaded the much smaller town of their choice. Therefore, if they went to Carpentras in the autumn of 1312, their visit must have been a short one [3] ; and Petracco and his new friend would recall their families as soon as they could be properly housed. We may feel sure, however, that, in his

[1] T. Okey (*op. cit.*), p. 55, and Joudou, I. p. 105.

[2] *Sen.* X. 2 (to Gui Sette).

[3] In that case Petrarch's statement that he went there to go to school must be erroneous, unless he was twice at the same school. The " *pæne ab infantiâ* " of *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.), gives a faint support to the latter view.

first winter and spring beyond the Alps, the boy must have had more than one glimpse of the invalid Pope, the beginner of that "Babylonish captivity" which was to outlast his life, in spite of his many protests against it for more than forty years.

The need for a school for Francesco was now becoming pressing; and we learn from the Epistle to Posterity that he attended a school at Avignon.

"In these two places," he says, speaking of Avignon and Carpentras, "I learnt a smattering of Grammar, Dialectic and Rhetoric" (*i.e.* the *Trivium*) "suited to my age—as much, in fact, as is generally learnt in schools, and how little that is, dear reader, you are well aware."

Since in another letter of rather later date [1] he speaks in much higher terms of his later school, he must here have been thinking chiefly of his first place of instruction. Probably it was a school attached to the cathedral or some other parish church; but in the fourteenth century the cathedral was governed by a chapter of monks (or canons regular) who had long lost their control over education. Yet they may have committed the conduct of their school to some secular clergy who were in their pay; and at that time in all cathedrals, at least theoretically, the bishop assumed the general direction of educational matters.

To most cathedrals in France were then attached two schools —one for both sexes, in which were taught the rudiments of the "vulgar tongue" and a little sacred music, the other, called "the great school" or "the Latin school," for the grounding of promising boys of the better classes in Latin and in the other elementary parts of the *Trivium*. Both of these schools were under the management of a single superintendent, called the "rector" or headmaster of the schools; he was responsible to the bishop and received a fixed annual fee from each scholar, payable in two instalments, together with a supplementary payment which went to the repair of the sacred fabric. These schools were exclusively for the benefit of the citizens of the town; they took no boarders, and the children returned home for all their meals. But in some places, as at Troyes, there was a system of

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.), which is dated in 1373 or 1374. The earlier part of the Epistle to Posterity was, in my opinion, written several years before. See Excursus VII. (Vol. II.).

"gratuities" for poorer boys in return for such services as cleaning and sweeping out the school twice a week.[1]

We may safely assume that in his early boyhood, from lack of a father's care and from the turmoil of the moves to Pisa and Avignon, Francesco's education had been almost entirely neglected. As in the case of other men of intellectual power, this early "fallow-time" may have turned out to his advantage. Before he left his native shores, his mother or some Tuscan friend may have taught him to read; but in the days before printing that accomplishment was both less common and harder to acquire than it became afterwards. At Avignon, early in his ninth year, he was probably sent first to the elementary cathedral school. But the superintendent[2] would soon discover, from his quickness and intelligence, that he could be "moved up" to the Latin school, where he began the studies that were to be his solace through life. We know little of the methods of the mediæval teachers of elementary Latin; but a list which is extant of the school books of the Dauphin (afterwards Louis XI.), though belonging to the following century, may give us an idea of the pabulum on which his youthful mind was fed. They include: (1) a Psalter of the Seven Psalms (? penitential), which had to be learnt by heart; (2) a "Donat," or treatise on the parts of speech by Donatus, an early grammarian; (3) an "Accidens," or grammar on the cases of nouns and the conjugation of verbs; (4) a "Cato" or collection of moral distichs in Latin, sometimes written with a French translation; and (5) a "Doctrinal," or Latin grammar taken from the fourth-century work of Priscian, but rendered into Leonine rhyming verse by Alexandre de Villedieu, a distinguished Paris doctor of the thirteenth century. We cannot suppose that arithmetic was entirely neglected, but it was reckoned among the subjects of the *Quadrivium*, which were intended for more advanced students. By some early teacher Francesco was led to write a neat and legible hand, which still survives on the margins of

[1] P. Lacroix, *Science and Literature in the Middle Ages*, pp. 27, 28.

[2] If I do not misunderstand Filippo Villani (line 7 in his life of Petrarch, in de Sade, Vol. III. p. 9, of *Pièces Justificatives*), he gives the name of this teacher as "Yridole," whom he calls "spectabilis." Perhaps the spelling is not correct, but the name seems rather French than Italian. Filippo survived P. about thirty years; but his life must have been written not long after the poet's death.

some of his books and which gave the great printer Aldus an idea for the type of some of his editions—a type still called from that circumstance "italics." [1]

If we are right in assuming that Petracco avoided Carpentras as a residence for his family during the stay of the Papal Court and the succeeding Conclave, it must have been in 1315 [2] that he heard of a capable Italian grammarian who was keeping school in that town and may have been attracted thither by the presence of the Pope and cardinals. Petrarch has given a long account of this teacher in one of his latest letters,[3] though without mentioning his name; it is Filippo Villani who informs us that he was called Convennole or—as it should rather be written—"Convenevole" da Prato. His pupil tells us that he was a Tuscan, and that he counted among his scholars the Cardinal Niccolo da Prato, Bishop of Ostia. We can hardly doubt that it was on the recommendation of this eminent fellow-countryman that Convenevole, like Petracco, migrated to Provence,[4] and that it was he who advised the notary to place his boy under the Tuscan's tuition. The Cardinal could not have been a pupil of Convenevole in his youth, for he must have been at least ten years his senior; but he may have taken lessons from him either in Italy or France in order to revive his knowledge of the Latin classics. Petrarch mentions a "report" that Convenevole "kept a school for full sixty years" [5]—a period which must have ended not with the poet's schooldays, but with the master's death about 1340, when he must have been past eighty. The school that he kept must have been what we should call a private

[1] Mr. Hollway-Calthrop (p. 86)—I know not on what authority—denies the possibility of this imitation and attributes the statement to "tradition." But it is Aldus himself who makes it in the "Advertisement to Readers" at the end of his edition of the *Rime* (July, 1501). See A. Firmin Didot, *Alde Manuce et l'Hellenisme a Venise* (1875), and a contemporary letter of Lorenzo da Pavia there quoted (pp. 158, 161, 164, 170–172). The character first appeared in the Aldine edition of Virgil of the same year.

[2] It was Baldelli (*Del Petrarca e delle sue Opere*. Florence, 1837, p. 302) who first saw that, according to the chronology of the Letter to Posterity, P.'s stay at Carpentras must have begun in this year.

[3] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

[4] De Sade asserts that Convenevole first taught P. at Pisa, but he gives no authority, and I imagine there is none, except that P. says he was his teacher "*pæne ab infantiâ*"—a loose expression which he might apply to the age of eleven.

[5] "*Sexaginta totos, ut fama erat, annos scholas rexit,*" *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.). De Sade places his death in 1340, which is more likely than Baldelli's 1344. The Cardinal died in 1321, aged about seventy.

school for boys of the middle and professional classes; and among Petrarch's later acquaintances we shall find many "grammarians" who earned a living in the same way.[1] Convenevole seems to have been of good family, for among his contemporaries in his native town there were two of his name who attained the office of judge. His full name was Convenevole di Ser Acconcio di Ricovero. But in spite of his long devotion to the education of youth, he was constantly in money difficulties, in which Petracco, as long as he lived, helped him so far as he could; and after his death, as we shall see later, his son did the same at a time when he was himself straitened in means.

To the care, then, of this middle-aged scholar Francesco and Gui Sette were committed at the age of eleven; and we can imagine that in so small a town—damaged by fire and then deserted by its natural defenders—there would be few other pupils. Our poet says, in the last year of his life, that he had never known Convenevole's equal as a teacher, though he lacked the power of putting his great knowledge to practical use. The pupil compares the master, in Horace's well-known simile, to a whetstone, which can give the sharpest edge to serviceable tools without possessing itself the power of cutting. "He was always beginning to write books with grand titles, but after the completion of the preface—which, though standing first, is generally the writer's last effort—he turned his unstable fancy to some other work."[2] But once at least he may perhaps have completed a design. There exists at Florence in manuscript an anonymous poem in praise of King Robert of Naples, which has long been considered to be his work. The writer calls himself a professor of Prato, which was for many years a fief of the house of Anjou; and his work was composed between 1335 and 1340, during which period Convenevole returned to his native place. In 1339—two years before his great pupil—he was granted by the King the use of a laurel crown; and this honour may have been given in reward for the adulation of the poem which declares Robert worthy of

[1] See G. Giani, *Ser Convenevole del Prato* (Prato, 1913), and A. d'Ancona's essay on Convenevole da Prato in his *Letteratura Italiana dei primi secoli* (Milan, 1891), pp. 103–147, who enumerates Donnino da Piacenza, Rinaldo da Villafranca, Ghiberto da Parma, Croto da Bergamo, Moggio da Parma, Guglielmo da Pastrengo, Pietro da Bologna, Benvenuto da Imola and Donato di Casentino (p. 117).

[2] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.). Cf. Horace, *A. P.* 304.

the sovereignty of the world. The chief objection to Convenevole's authorship is that it is written in barbarous Latin and in rhymed hexameters, of both of which he ought to have been incapable [1]; but it may have been the work of a vain old age, parading a scholarship [2] which had once existed but had now slipped from its grasp.

To the last there must have been something of the "needy adventurer" about Convenevole. But he was clearly inspired by a love of classical antiquity, which he had the power of communicating to his pupils. From Petrarch's notes on the margin of his Quintilian we learn that he was the possessor of a voice of marvellous strength.[3] He was perhaps the first to recognize the intellectual promise of Petrarch's childhood, and he felt an affection for him which he took no pains to conceal. Some twenty years later Cardinal Giovanni Colonna,

"who was fond of joking with him, said to him one day: 'Tell me, master—for I know you love all your many and famous pupils—have you any place in your heart for our Francesco?' Silent at first, the old man turned away, choked with sobs, and swore by all that is holy that he never loved any of the whole number so well."

There can be no doubt that Petrarch, who calls him "a simple-minded old man and a splendid master," fully reciprocated the feeling.[4]

[1] Fil. Villani, in calling him a mediocre poet, may perhaps refer to this effort.

[2] The poet imagines an old grey monarch (Robert) seated upon his throne and giving audience successively to various allegorical figures. First come Italy and Rome as matrons in mourning guise (cf. P.'s poetic letters to Benedict XII. and Clement VI.); then Hercules with his club (as an emblem of force); then Florence, followed by Faith, Hope and Charity; lastly the four heathen virtues, Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Moderation. The conclusion consists of a prayer to God and an address by the Holy Spirit. C. da P. is also said to have left a prose treatise on the Fourteen Virtues.

[3] P. de Nolhac (*op. cit.* II. p. 94).

[4] These details are from *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac). G. Voigt (*Wiederbelebung des Classischen Alterthums*, I. p. 23) says that in this letter P. speaks of his master "rather with a proud compassion than with filial respect." I confess that this sort of German criticism (of which Koerting furnishes other examples) fills me with amazement. There is no ground for it, except that P., writing more than thirty years after his tutor's death, speaks of him as "*seniculus*" and "*homunculus*," referring perhaps to his shortness of stature. The letter affords plain evidence of his tact and delicacy in dealing with the old man's necessities.

We have few particulars of the home life at Carpentras ; but we know that our poet had the pleasantest memories of these days of his boyhood. More than fifty years afterwards he wrote to Gui Sette [1] :

" You remember those four years—the happiness and security we enjoyed, the rest at home and liberty abroad, the field-rambles at our leisure and the hush of the country-side. I feel thankful for it all, as I am sure do you, to the Author of all our days, Who granted me an interval so tranquil, without any turmoil of events, in which to suck the tender milk of boyish learning, so far as my powers permitted, till I was strong enough to take more solid nutriment."

The terms of this passage seem to preclude any residence of the family at Carpentras during the visit of the Curia and the tumultuous Conclave which succeeded it. Carpentras, though the capital of the Papal province of the Comtât Venaissin, was a very small place, seldom containing more than four or five thousand inhabitants, whose ordinarily sleepy existence would be seriously disturbed by any great influx of visitors. Many months would be needed for it to recover from the fires and other damage caused by the Gascon freebooters. Indeed, in the letter quoted, Petrarch—contrasting unfavourably, as was his wont, the present with the past—says that, by an incursion of disbanded soldiers (or rather brigands) a few years later, it was " not merely harassed and devastated, but reduced to the utmost depth of misery."

The town is situated at the edge of a fertile plain adjoining the western foothills of Mont Ventoux. This great mountain, which rises suddenly on the south aspect to a height of 6000 feet, seems to dominate the place, like a gigantic natural bastion. The boy Francesco must have often wondered what the view from the top would be like ; and he tells us that the desire of climbing it was in his mind for many years before he actually accomplished the feat.[2] In his day it was inaccessible, even to pedestrians, from the side nearest the town ; but modern engineering has succeeded in constructing a circuitous carriage road from thence through Bedoin to the summit. As a place of residence Carpentras combined many of the advantages of town and

[1] *Sen.* X. 2. [2] *F.* IV. 1.

country. Then, as now, the wine of the district, if not famous, was respectable; and the environs were beautified by large plantations of olives. They are watered by the little river Auzon, from whose stream no doubt Clement constructed his fountains, though later times have found it necessary to supplement them by an imposing aqueduct. In the fourteenth century its streets were narrow and crooked; yet the wide market-place, which was the scene of the riot, gave it a certain homely dignity. For many centuries before the French Revolution the town was the seat of a bishop; but since that date it has been merged in the diocese of Avignon.

To a boy who was taking in the first "tender milk" of classical lore the Roman associations of the place must have been a source of great interest; and though archæology as a science was still unborn, Convenevole may have had knowledge enough to introduce them into his teaching. Modern antiquarians are not agreed whether "Carpentoracte"—as Pliny calls it—the capital of a Gaulish tribe, was a colony of Roman veterans; but portions of its ancient walls still remain, though overlaid by mediæval work. Its most imposing edifice was a triumphal arch of noble dimensions, which then, as at present, existed in a side street near the episcopal palace (now the Palais de Justice). No inscription can now be read, and its sculptures are too defaced to be interpreted with certainty. In the seventeenth century one of the bishops enclosed it in his kitchen; but it has since been liberated from these sordid surroundings. Popular tradition connected it with the neighbouring victories of Marius over the Cimbri or with the spacious days of Augustus; but nothing is really known of its origin. Such stories must have found an eager listener in the dreamy lad who, though an exile, considered himself a late partner in the renown of Rome and held all northern peoples to be merely barbarous subjects of her sway.

In the home *régime* at Carpentras there was one disadvantage, which may have reacted unfavourably on Petrarch's disposition. His father, whose business lay principally at Avignon, was not a regular member of the family circle, and therefore could not so well contribute, as otherwise he might and would have done, to the formation of his son's character. He paid occasional visits; but he was too much occupied with hard professional work (in order to maintain the home) to give sufficient time to

its higher needs. Some of Petrarch's biographers [1] assert that his father "went into trade" on his arrival in Provence; it seems far more likely that he continued to practise his ancestral profession. But whatever his calling, his work was just too far away for him to reside continually at home; and we must remember that, except for the previous four years (or part of that time) he had been almost a stranger in his own family. This circumstance is alone enough to account for a certain coolness on the son's part, which Koerting [2] rather ascribes to a great disparity in age and to a contrast of character as strong as that between realism and idealism. Francesco seems to have been more than half afraid of his father, and consequently to have shrunk from giving him his full confidence. He may have thought that Petracco failed to appreciate his abilities. But perhaps the truth was that he considered they were too well appreciated already, and that he detected signs of vanity which were due to a mother's over-fondness for her clever son. Wherever Petrarch went in after life, he seems to have had a way of dominating the society in which he moved—not so much by force of will, in which he was deficient and which often arouses opposition, as by the sweetness of his natural temper and by his strong bent for friendship. An incident in the next chapter will show that in Petracco there was a vein of hardness and even of severity, due no doubt to the struggles and disappointments of his chequered life. Such opposites do not readily coalesce, but if there was lack of sympathy, there was on the son's side no breach of respect. The difference of age was not great enough to account for this; for according to the more probable view [3] Petracco only reached his fiftieth year during this time at Carpentras. He was then apparently in full health and strength, but was apt, as self-willed men cumbered with business often are, to worry himself inordinately about trifles. To a friend long after Petrarch gives an

[1] As Sicco Polentone (fifteenth century).

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 46.

[3] P. gives two inconsistent accounts of his father's age. In *F.* XXI. 15, he says he was a little younger than Dante, which would place his birth about 1267; but in *Sen.* X. 2 (the passage quoted below) he says he was about his own age at the date (1368) of his letter, which would make him about fifteen years older. The allusion in *F.* VI. 3, which is only consistent with the former, shows that the other was a slip of memory.

account [1]—half playful, half critical—of the loud laments which his father poured forth to his family and his neighbours on the discovery, when he was just past fifty, of his first grey hair.

On one all-important point we have Petrarch's own emphatic testimony, that he was reared in a home, the very atmosphere of which was devout, where the Christian duties were discharged in no mere perfunctory way, but the children were led to place their hope and trust in an Unseen Master. In the Dialogue, which might be called his "Confessions," [2] he makes Augustine, his favourite saint, remind him that in childhood he had a religious disposition, with a strong love of God and of virtue, and frequently meditated on death; and the admission is extorted that in all these things he had grown worse rather than better. This reminiscence was no fond delusion of his old age; it was written in his fortieth year, when, as he says himself, "the memory of his infancy and boyhood were before his eyes, as if they were yesterday." Considering his father's frequent absence, the chief credit for this part of his education must be given to his mother; but there is evidence that Petracco, according to his lights, was a conscientious father, though rather over strict and inclined to insist on having his own way.

On the intellectual side we might suppose that a man, who had been drawn into friendship with Dante "by similarity of gifts and studies," [3] would exercise much influence on the mental development of his boy; and, to some extent, such would seem to have been the case. Petracco possessed a fine manuscript of Cicero, for whom he had an immense veneration; and he induced his son at an early age, when his knowledge of Latin was still immature, to spell out some of it himself. Perhaps, too, when his business permitted, he read some passages with him and helped him in his difficulties. Francesco bears witness in his old age [4] that his father

"might easily have risen to a great height of scholarship, had not his family business with his exile and the weight of domestic burdens drawn his fine talents aside and compelled him to attend to other matters. At that age then," he says, "when all older

[1] *F.* VI. 3 (to G. Colonna di San Vito).
[2] *Secretum*, or *De Contemptu Mundi*, Dial. III. p. 401 (Bâle ed.).
[3] *F.* XXI. 15.
[4] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

boys are yawning over Prosper and Æsop,[1] I applied myself to the books of Cicero. I could understand nothing; simply the sweetness and harmony of the language enchained me, so that whatever else I heard or read sounded to me harsh and even discordant. That was a child's judgment, I confess, for it rested on no reason; yet not childish, for I have the same sort of feeling to-day, when I understand a good deal. My eagerness increased daily, as my father's admiration and devotion to the author stimulated my efforts; and I was already tasting some of the sweetness of the kernel when I had scarce broken the shell."

These voluntary studies—for they may be presumed to have been outside school work—favoured both the strong and the weak side of the boy's natural gifts. He had a wonderful ear for rhythm, both in prose and poetry; but he was also far too much inclined to prefer rhetoric to reason and fact. His devotion to poetry, ancient and modern, began later during his university career. But his mastery of his native idiom was surely not due, as an Italian critic[2] suggests, to his having a Tuscan schoolmaster. Tuscan was the language of his childhood and of his home-life; and, if he could speak the Provençal, which he heard around him, it would be indifferently and with imperfect pronunciation.

The letter of old age[3] to Gui Sette in 1368 has preserved one holiday incident of the life at Carpentras, which we should have been loth to lose. Petracco had come out to Carpentras on one of his occasional visits in company with Gui's uncle on the father's side, who was a stranger to the district; and the latter expressed a wish to see the famous source of the Sorgues at Vaucluse. The boys were seized with an ardent desire to accompany their elders. It was a long day's excursion of ten or twelve miles each way over rough and hilly country; and the only possible mode of travel was on horseback, for of roads, in the modern sense, there were none. The fears of Eletta—whom Francesco here calls "the best of mothers I have ever seen"[4] and as fond of

[1] Poems under the name of Prosper (probably not St. Prosper of Aquitaine) were used as a schoolbook for children in the Middle Ages (*De Ot. Rel.* II. 354, Bâle ed.). Koerting (p. 66) is therefore wrong in supposing it was the World-Chronicle. The Æsop was not Phædrus but the mediæval paraphrase known under the name of Romulus (De Nolhac, I. p. 211).

[2] A. d'Ancona (*op. cit.*); p. 146.

[3] *Sen.* X. 2.

[4] Koerting (*op. cit.* p. 67 n.), with the peculiar German critical twist

Gui as of her own child—were keenly aroused, but she at length yielded to their eager solicitation; and it was settled that, as they were unaccustomed to riding, they should each be under the care of a servant, who should guide the horse, while holding his charge before him on the saddle. So at last, with many urgent instructions on her part for their safety, they were allowed to set out. Even now it is scarcely possible to ride to the source itself; so the horses would be left in the village and the remaining distance covered on foot.

We reserve for a future chapter a full description of this renowned spot, which Petrarch—as with characteristic self-complacency he here reminds his friend—has made still more famous by his long residence there and by his poems. But it should be said that, owing to the disappearance of a large forest of oaks in the lower valley, it was far more beautiful then than it is at present. Let us hear Francesco's first impressions of delight, which were as keen as they proved to be lasting:

"When we came to the source of the Sorgues, I remember as well as if it had happened to-day how, struck by the extraordinary beauty of the spot, I thought to myself in my childish way, 'Here is a place most suited to my nature, which, if I ever get the chance, I should prefer to great cities.'"

He goes on to say that, though at that time—awed no doubt by the presence of his practical father—he kept these thoughts to himself, he was afterwards able to realize his desire. Fracassetti not improbably supposes [1] that this expedition took place in 1316; and, if so, it was in the very year—perhaps soon after the time—when Petracco informed his son for what profession he was to be educated. The boy's impressions may have been a revulsion of feeling against a calling from which by nature he shrank, though he hardly knew why. But they are interesting also for other reasons. Here was a child of twelve, experiencing feelings of awe and delight combined at the union in savage grandeur of mountain and rock and torrent—feelings which in

above noticed, calls this the one cordial word P. has given to his mother. As he devoted a poem to her memory in which he calls her "dulcissima," and elsewhere only mentions her (in passing) in two letters, the remark is as absurd as it is unfounded.

[1] *Lettere* (Ital. trans.), I. p. 165 (in the "chronology"). His reasons are not given.

such circumstances were almost entirely strange to the men of the Middle Ages. But it is quite as striking that he then and there formed a resolution which he carried out after the lapse of twenty years, though he mentions no intervening visit. He was right in thinking that the place suited his genius. For, as Koerting [1] well says, "He has for ever consecrated the valley the Sorgues, and made it for all noble hearts a holy place."

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 67.

CHAPTER IV

AT THE UNIVERSITIES—MONTPELLIER AND BOLOGNA (1319–1326)

IN a letter written at Milan,[1] probably about the year 1358, Petrarch tells his correspondent that he was destined by his father to the study of civil law—that is, to the career of an advocate—when he had scarcely passed his twelfth year. If the date is exact, as may well be the case, it refers of course not to the commencement of his legal studies, but to the time when his somewhat strict father, with little or no reference to the wishes of so young a boy, announced to him the profession for which he intended to have him educated. It is plain from several allusions in his works [2] that Petrarch subsequently considered this paternal resolution to have been unfortunate and mistaken. But, if he felt any repugnance at the time, he would probably not show it; indeed, at the age in question few boys have begun to think seriously about either the necessity or the means of earning their living. Petracco may have thought he had detected signs not only of his son's intellectual power but also of a sort of dreamy sensibility, which, without the bracing of a definite prospect, might soon have unfitted him for a practical life. The notary seems to have been a man who expected unquestioning obedience from those about him; and the matter was thenceforth regarded as settled.

Three years were still to elapse before any definite steps were taken. But in 1319 arrangements were made for sending Francesco,[3] with Gui Sette, the inseparable companion of his studies, to the Law University of Montpellier. Since the two

[1] *F.* XX. 4 (to Marco of Genoa, for extract see below, pp. 143–146). Fracassetti (*Lettere*, I. 223, n.) unnecessarily supposes the statement to be inconsistent with P.'s chronology of his early years.

[2] *Sen.* X. 2, and XVI. 1; *Ep. Post.*; and *Rer. Mem.* III. Chap. IV.

[3] H. Cochin (*Le Frère de P.* (Paris, 1903), p. 13) rightly disbelieves that Gherardo, who was only twelve years old, accompanied him.

boys had scarcely passed their fifteenth year, it is not conceivable that they led the independent life in hired lodgings, which was usual among students at the mediæval Universities. They must have been placed as boarders with some family, whose head was responsible for their conduct outside the lecture-room [1]; and as their new residence was only forty or fifty miles from home, they would doubtless return thither for any vacation that exceeded a fortnight. The oversight of their studies would be committed to some tutor or professor, who, as the sequel proves, must have taken his charge rather too lightly.

The first long absence from home is an epoch in the life of any boy of serious promise. By our English custom it is associated with a stricter discipline, which is as salutary as it is often felt to be irksome. But with Petrarch the contrary was the case. He was suddenly thrown into a new and unfamiliar course of study which took him from the classics that he had begun to love; and he probably had greater liberty and more time at his own disposal than he had ever enjoyed before. He had the companionship of his boy friend, who may have been a more conscientious student than himself, but who had not the same temptations to stray from the appointed path. Our information about these critical years is sadly scanty; indeed, beyond the bare statement that he studied law for four years at Montpellier, we have only one passage of seven lines, written fifty years later, which gives few particulars, and takes the rosy hue so often present in the reminiscences of old age. In his letter of 1368 [2] Petrarch writes to Gui Sette:

"On the approach of puberty, being designed for the study of law, we spent four years at Montpellier—at that time a most flourishing town, which was in the dominion of the King of Majorca, except a small corner of it subject to the King of France, who shortly after obtained the lordship of the whole town (the usual encroachment of a very powerful neighbour). At that time what tranquillity and peace it enjoyed! Its merchants abounded in wealth; there were scholars and masters in plenty. Now, what a change! As we know well (and the citizens, too,

[1] Sig. Corazzini (*op. cit.* in Excursus II.) fancies that Eletta lived with her sons at Montpellier, which is of course possible, though highly improbable.

[2] *Sen.* X. 2.

who remember those days), there is an utter lack of all these things and of signs of prosperity both public and private."

The decline of Montpellier, to which Petrarch here alludes, was an undoubted fact; its prosperous days had already run their course in the thirteenth century, under the rule of Aragon, from which the kingdom of Majorca was an offshoot. The Kings of Aragon had obtained its lordship by marriage at the opening of that century (1204), and the fortunes of the town were made by its capable king, James I., who left it at his death, with the Balearic Islands, to his younger son James—the first King of Majorca. Its greatest prosperity was an aftermath of the Crusades, for whose armies its enterprising merchants had vied with Genoa and Marseilles in providing equipment and transport.[1] The town then had foreign settlements at Alexandria, Beyrout, Tripoli and Tyre; and in the old commercial route by land between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic—to avoid the long sea-voyage through the Straits of Gibraltar—it had great importance as one of the chief trading centres of the Northern Mediterranean.[2] It is situated about five miles from the sea, with Cette for its port; and its position on a commanding eminence, overlooking the sea and the great plain of Languedoc, made it both a healthy and delightful place of residence. The two towns of Montpellier and Montpellieret on opposite sides of the hill eventually coalesced under the name of the former. From the citadel could be descried in clear weather to the east Mont Ventoux, in whose shadow lay Petrarch's home, and to the west the distant peaks of the Pyrenees. The town was surrounded with walls, which still exist in a ruinous condition; but it possesses little to-day to remind us of its ancient glory, except these and the mediæval Tour de la Babotte. In Petrarch's time its connexion with Spain must have given it an eastern flavour, which to him must have been new and fascinating. It had a large Jewish population, and in its streets might often have been seen Moors, the conquered subjects of its Christian king. The "dual lordship" to which Petrarch refers arose from the fact that a portion of the town had never been subject to the ancient Counts of Montpellier; it had been under the power of

[1] W. Cunningham, *Western Civilization in its Economic Aspects*, 1900, II. 126.

[2] J. A. Beazley, *Dawn of Modern Geography*, Part II., 1901, p. 434.

the Bishops of Maguelonne, the neighbouring ruined city,[1] to which Montpellier had succeeded. These bishops had the spiritual oversight of the latter town, from which they did not take their title till 1538; but in 1293 they had sold the feudal rights, which they possessed within its precincts, to the grasping Philip the Fair. The rest of the town passed—also by purchase—from James III., the last King of Majorca, to Philip of Valois, in 1349. During Petrarch's residence the sovereign was Sancho, grandson of the first and uncle of the last Balearic king.

The unique distinction of Montpellier was its "double University" of Law and of Medicine.[2] The foundations of the two appear to have been quite distinct; but that of Medicine was somewhat the older, and was from the first under the authority of the Bishop. The Law School had been founded by Placentinus, a seceding Doctor from Bologna, who first lectured in the town about the end of the twelfth century. The Bedel's mace was subsequently tipped with his image, and the Hall of the Faculty bore the inscription "Aula Placentina." During the thirteenth century the Bishop obtained the same control over the conferment of degrees in Civil and Canon Law as he already had in Medicine. In 1289 Pope Nicholas IV. recognized the Law School by Bull as a "Studium Generale" (*i.e.* a University)—a distinction which it had long enjoyed by custom and by the goodwill of former Popes.[3] The two Universities, which had a separate organization, were both more completely under the Bishop than was the case at Paris or at Oxford.

During Petrarch's stay the law scholars endeavoured to turn their school into a "Student-University" of the same type as Bologna. In 1319—the very year of his arrival—the Pope, at the Bishop's request, had quashed a statute made by the Students' Rector and his council; and the next year the Bishop issued a proclamation against secret conventicles and confederations of scholars, and against the hostility shown by the students of one province towards those of another. It looks as if the authorities were determined to suppress any attempt to form "nations" of

[1] It is said to have been destroyed by Charles Martel for supporting the Saracens.

[2] The details which follow are taken from Rashdall, *History of the Mediæval Universities*, Vol. II. Pt. I. pp. 124–133.

[3] Mr. Hollway-Calthrop (p. 18) is less accurate than usual in speaking of it as a "High School," whatever that may mean.

the kind that we shall find at Bologna. But the movement proves that the majority of the students must have been much older than Petrarch at the time, and that the idea of the Montpellier course being preparatory to that at Bologna is erroneous. The relations between "town and gown" at this University seem to have been exceptionally strained; and the democratic spirit apparently spread from the University of Law to that of Medicine. The chief bone of contention was the right claimed by the students to import wine from other districts in spite of the protective system, which excluded all wine except that grown on the lands of the citizens. In the half-century following the departure of our poet the Law School became gradually overshadowed by its medical competitor; and in 1362 its professors complained to Urban V. that whereas at one time they had had over a thousand students there were then scarcely a hundred. The decline may have been due in part to the city's inclusion in the kingdom of France and to the consequent diversion of southern students to Bologna and to the new Universities of Spain. But it was also partly the result of a loss of commerce due to a shifting of the trade routes.

The teaching of the Roman Civil Law in such centres as Montpellier and Toulouse had far-reaching consequences, at which we have hinted in our first chapter. The Code of Justinian had been strange to these regions, but it soon superseded the version of the Theodosian Code then current in the south; and it became a formidable rival to the more recently codified Canon Law. The stiff condemnation of usury by the latter found little support in the former; and therefore the Italian Civil Law proved far more suited to mercantile communities than the ecclesiastical regulations, which it helped them to evade, if not entirely to disregard. This was one reason why Montpellier, as long as its commerce flourished, attracted so many law students. Its curriculum, like that of distant Bologna, gave an opportunity to the Provençals and their neighbours, who had no vocation for a clerical career, to qualify for rich and honourable posts which abounded in commercial centres. This state of things accounts for the invective of Roger Bacon [1] against the study of Civil Law. His chief objections to it are its superior popularity, and the

[1] *Compendium Studii Philosophiæ*, Cap. IV. (Brewer's ed., *Rolls Series*), p. 419.

fact that its teachers, while desiring to be "clerks," were really laymen. His prejudices were those of a friar in England—where this law was not in vogue and was little studied in the schools—and of a member of the University of Paris, where its study was prohibited. There was a strong contrast between the prevailing studies of the north and the south of Western Europe in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries [1]—a contrast due to the difference of political conditions. Northern France and England were in the bonds of feudalism, tempered by the authority of the Church; Italy was the home of free municipalities and of a more secular culture. In the former the bent of students was towards theology and the scholastic dialectic; in the latter towards grammar and rhetoric, which were necessary preliminaries to the study of the Roman Code. Provence and Languedoc occupied a middle position between the two systems; but when the fourteenth century dawned, this region had been covered by the advancing tide of secular culture, which had even affected, as we have seen, the attitude of Northern France towards Papal authority. It is highly significant that William of Nogaret had been a Professor of Civil Law at Montpellier, and had afterwards obtained a lucrative post as Judge of Beaucaire. The awakening of political life in the south had made an honourable civil career open to those who did not wish to live by the profession of arms. In Italy and Southern France jurists were in great request as judges, magistrates, ambassadors and consulting lawyers to princes and municipal governments. We can see, then, that the exiled notary at Avignon, with his ancestral bias in favour of law, was choosing a profession for his son which offered high prospects to a lad of promise.

To our eyes, perhaps, the age of fifteen seems very early for the commencement of such studies. Petrarch would have as fellow-students many men of mature years—some, perhaps, in minor orders and already beneficed [2]—who wished to acquire a smattering of civil law as a help in their future work as canonists. We do not exactly know the curriculum at Montpellier; but if

[1] Rashdall, *op. cit.* I. p. 95.

[2] Honorius III. had forbidden the study of civil law to priests; it was therefore common for lesser clerics to undergo a course before they were fully ordained. "Civil Law," says Rashdall (I. pp. 134, 135), "was the chief source of the Canon Law; everything in the latter was of Roman that was not of Christian or Jewish origin."

it was modelled on that of Bologna, the mother-University, a course in the "Arts" might be taken as a preparation for legal study. Before the foundation of Law Universities Law was regarded as merely a branch of Rhetoric [1]; but afterwards the three "Arts" of the *Trivium*—Grammar, Dialectic and Rhetoric—were all drawn into the service of Law and were thought indispensable to the development of Eloquence. Grammar meant the knowledge of Latin—not so much that of the classical authors, already dear to Petrarch, as the jargon of the jurists, which had little in common with it. Dialectic (*i.e.* Logic) was in the south rather an instrument for legal than for theological studies and comprised an explanation of terms used in the legal text-books and certain rules for pleading. Rhetoric was not so much an aid to high thought and fine speaking as a training in the tricks of the bar, an attempt to make the worse appear the better reason. But an important intermediate study at Bologna was "Dictamen"—the art of composition both in prose and poetry—which was a link between the "Grammar" and the "Rhetoric" of Law. In 1224 an Englishman named Geoffrey composed at Bologna two text-books for the twin branches of this art; and the prose manual contained, not what we should call a "guide to Latin prose," but rather hints for writing letters on state business and for the drawing of public briefs. We can fancy how dry and unsatisfactory such studies would appear to a boy like Petrarch, who was already an admirer of the classics and was learning to love literature for its own sake. It is surprising that one who had been through this "mill" should show so few traces of it in his Latin writings. But genius has a remarkable power of resistance to influences that are distasteful; and so far from complaining with Erasmus [2] and others of the "rudeness" of Petrarch's Latinity, we should be disposed to wonder that it was so little influenced by his legal education. We know nothing of his teachers at Montpellier [3]; but since classical

[1] Rhetoric was divided into (1) Demonstrative, (2) Deliberative, and (3) Judicial, the last including Law. See Rashdall, I. p. 103.

[2] In the "Ciceronianus." See also the severe judgment of Paolo Cortese quoted in Roscoe's *Lorenzo di Medici*, Chap. VII. p. 240 (cr. 8vo ed.).

[3] Squarzafico in his life of P. states that two of them were Giovanni Calderini and Bartolomeo D'Osa or D'Ossa. Tomasini, who is evidently following him, appears (perhaps by a mistake in punctuation) to place their lectures at Bologna and those of Giovanni d'Andrea and Cino da Pistoia at Montpellier (*Petrarcha Bedivivus*, p. 13). De Sade—in other

studies had never died out in Italy, his tutor may have been some Italian professor, who was content to wink at, if not openly to encourage, his preference for the Latin of the golden age.

This circumstance, we may well believe, would be most displeasing to Petracco, if he came to suspect it; and that he did so is rendered probable by an incident of his son's University career, which the latter relates [1] in old age as at once "ridiculous and mournful," without mentioning the place of its occurrence. It seems certain that it belongs to the Montpellier period [2]; if it did not take place at home during some vacation (as is less likely), it was in that University where, in his own words, he ought to have been studying "the laws of lending and borrowing, of wills and codicils, of property rural and urban," that he kept some works of Cicero and the poets in a safe hiding-place and frequently enjoyed this "forbidden fruit." Suddenly Petracco paid the surprise visit which his son had been dreading, and having discovered the concealed classics made a bonfire of them—

"at the sight of which I made as loud an outcry as if I had myself been thrown into the flames. Then my father, I well remember, beholding me in such distress, quickly withdrew two books almost blackened by the fire; and taking Virgil in his right hand and the Rhetoric [3] of Cicero in his left, held them out to me with a smile, saying 'Take the first as an occasional relaxation for your mind and the second as an aid to your law studies.' These restored comrades—so few, but so eminent—consoled me, and I dried my tears."

If we doubt the wisdom of Petracco's procedure, we must admit

respects led by Squarzafico—transfers Calderini to Bologna (I. p. 42). All these are guesses with little or no foundation. Calderini was too young to have taught P. at either place. Tradition does not connect D'Ossa (who was of Bergamo) with either University; and we know that he was at Avignon in 1319 and at Bergamo in 1321, which would make his presence at Montpellier unlikely (F. Lo Parco, *Dei Maestri Canonisti attribuiti al P.* in *Revue des Bibliothèques* (t. XVI. pp. 301–318).

[1] In *Sen.* XVI. 1 (to Luca della Penna).

[2] So Koerting (p. 70), who is followed by other writers. This view is the more probable as such severity is more likely towards a boy than towards a grown youth. De Sade, following Squarzafico, places the incident at Bologna; and the earlier writers, who could have had no better authority than the above letter, tell the story in the style of an Italian novel, with many imaginary details which excite distrust.

[3] De Nolhac, I. 221, n. 1, notes that under this title Petrarch cites from the *De Inventione*, the *Ad Herennium*, and even the *Orator*.

that the provocation was extreme. His narrow means must have made it difficult for him to support his son at the University, and now his self-sacrifice seemed likely to prove fruitless. His son would have us believe that thenceforward he confined his roving propensities to the " comrades " that were spared to him until he was able to follow his own bent. But on such a point we must take these reminiscences of age with a very large grain of salt. In an earlier passage [1] he writes :

" It is vain to contend against nature. I strongly desired to obey my parents, but Nature constrained me ; and I need not say (what all men know) how far she carried me from fulfilling their wishes."

At Montpellier he was exposed to a literary temptation, a reference to which he would have felt to be beneath the dignity of his Latin works.[2] During his schooldays he had doubtless become familiar with the musical language of Southern France (the *Langue d'Oc*) which had not yet been supplanted by its northern neighbour. But at Avignon he was merely on the fringe of the land of the Troubadours, while at Montpellier he was residing in its very heart. It is true that nearly a century had elapsed since the golden age of the " Gai Science " ; but if its masters were all dead, they had left plenty of lesser disciples, who though devoid of original power, wandered from town to town and sang their masters' lays to the lute in the hearing of rapt crowds. These were the Jongleurs,[3] who were at first merely the attendants of the genuine Troubadours, but who survived them through prostituting their art to the love of gain and sometimes even through degrading it to the tricks of the conjuror.[4] Under the azure southern sky, with the blue Mediterranean in the distance, Petrarch must have often listened to these itinerant musicians in the squares and promenades ; and while

[1] *Rer. Mem.* III. iii. 515 (Bâle ed.). The context is referred to in Excursus II.

[2] De Nolhac rightly decides that the " burnt poets " could not have been Troubadours, for he would not have honoured them with the name of " poetæ " (*op. cit.* I. p. 34). His sole mention of them (outside the *Trionfi*) is an allusion to Arnaud Daniel in a note to Sonnet 226 (Aspro cor.).

[3] They had imitators in Italy, against whose importunity P. inveighs in a letter from Venice, *Sen.* V. 2.

[4] Sismondi (*Literature of the South of Europe*, I. 148) describes some of their antics from a contemporary source.

showing a boyish delight in their pranks, his fancy would sometimes be caught by some languishing lay of Arnaud Daniel or Bernard de Ventadour, and he would not rest till he had bought a copy of it and learnt something about its composer. We know there were lives of the most famous Troubadours both in prose and poetry, which were then much prized in the land of their origin and might easily come into his hands. Perhaps it was here, too, that he first learnt to play the lute, to which, even in later life, he was wont to sing his own sonnets in order to test the polish and smoothness of the rhythm.

We must say something in a later chapter of the extent of his debt to the Troubadours. But though we cannot prove that his admiration for them was first excited at Montpellier, we may be sure that it was increased there; for he would have an opportunity—only once afforded in later years [1]—of listening to legends about them and of collecting such poems as came in his way. A manuscript anthology of their works, still existing in the Vatican, was once supposed to have been his property; but though this tradition is now rejected, we need not conclude that they found no place in his library.[2] He mentions fifteen Troubadours by name in the *Triumph of Love*,[3] and it so happens that three of the fifteen were connected with Montpellier or its neighbourhood. There he would certainly hear of Hugues de St. Cyr,[4] who, being sent to the city like himself for purposes of study, gave all his attention instead to writing "sirventes" and "tensons," and ended by becoming a jongleur.[5] There, too, men would tell him of the laments of Arnaud de Marveilh—the lesser Arnaud [6]—who was supplanted in the favours of his mistress by Alfonso, King of Aragon, and retired inconsolable to his friend, the Count of Montpellier, in whose company he died an early death.[7] And the memory would still be fresh of the illicit loves of Guillem de Cabestainh [8] and the Countess of

[1] On his journey to Gascony in 1330. See Chap. IX. of this volume.
[2] I think de Nolhac (*P. et l'Humanisme*, II. p. 226) goes too far in making this assertion, of which he offers no proof.
[3] *Trionfo d'Amore* (ed. Mestica), Canto III. 40–55. See below, Chap. VI. p. 208.
[4] *Tri. d'Am.* III. 55.
[5] Eugene Baret, *Les Troubadours* (Paris, 1867), p. 176.
[6] *Tri d'Am.* III. 45, "*il'men famoso Arnaldo.*"
[7] Fauriel, *Histoire de la Poesie Provençale* (Paris, 1847), II. 54, 55.
[8] *Tri. d'Am.* III. 53, 54.

Roussillon, and of the imprisonment of the Count by the King, possibly at Montpellier, as a punishment for his terrible revenge.[1]

An old historian of Montpellier[2] asserts, without giving his authority, that Petrarch employed some of his leisure in retouching or modernizing the famous romance of Pierre de Provence and La Belle Maguelonne, which had been written before 1200 by Bernard de Treviez, Canon of Maguelonne. This romance, which has appeared in several languages, was one of the first specimens of Troubadour literature to pass through the press, having been printed at Lyons in a French translation in 1457. The story of Petrarch's work upon it may be merely traditional. But if it be true, it would be interesting to know whether he translated it into Italian or rewrote it in the *Langue d'Oc ;* if the latter, it is the only known instance of his employing that language.

We can well understand that it was dissatisfaction with Francesco's progress at Montpellier which induced Petracco to remove him in 1323, before he had qualified for his degree, and send him with his brother and Gui Sette to the far greater University at Bologna. If the notary could afford the time and was unable to find an accommodating friend to take his place, he might take them to Bologna himself[3] and engage a tutor (Petrarch calls him " preceptor "[4]) to superintend their studies and their general conduct. He would be the more likely to do this because the University had barely recovered from the serious secession of the students to Siena in 1321, which lasted more than a year.

The occasion of this outbreak illustrates the licence which prevailed at the Italian Universities as well as the peculiar constitution of that of Bologna. A certain student named Giacomo

[1] F. Hueffer (*The Troubadours*, pp. 159–162) throws grave doubt on the story of the unconscious eating by the lady of her slain lover's heart. Boccaccio relates it in the *Decameron* (Giorn IV. Nov. ix.).

[2] Gariel, *Idée de Montpellier*, quoted by Fauriel, III. 506, 507.

[3] H. Cochin (*Le Frère de P.* p. 16) suggests that the allusion in *F.* X. 3 (wrongly given in his note), to dangers encountered by the brothers when travelling by sea and land, must refer to this journey in the absence of any evidence that Gherardo accompanied him in his later travels. I find such evidence in the fact that the monk Dionisio Roberti is said by P. (in *F.* IV. I. written in 1336) to be well acquainted with his brother, whom (as far as we know) he could only have seen during the journey of 1333 at Paris (see Chap. IX.). The dangers by land might therefore be the crossing of the Ardennes in time of war, while the danger by sea was doubtless the shipwreck on the voyage to France in 1312.

[4] *Sen.* X. 2.

di Valenza fell violently in love with a girl of the city (apparently in church, as Petrarch with Laura) and abducted her from her home in the absence of her father. Her name was Costanza Zagnoni d'Argéla; she was niece of Giovanni d'Andrea, the famous Professor of Canon Law. Her father on his return took a body of citizens to attack Valenza's home, which was stoutly defended by himself and his friends. At length, however, the chief culprit was arrested by the Podestà, Giustinello Tisnigaldi, who condemned him to decapitation—a sentence which was carried out the next day. We do not know all the particulars; but if the defendant appealed to be tried by his own Rector in the University and the appeal was disallowed, the refusal was a flagrant breach of the privileges of the students.[1] On this occasion they were supported by some of the teaching body, and it was decided by common consent to secede to Siena, the whole congregation taking an oath not to return till they had received full satisfaction.[2] The loss of the University caused extreme consternation at Bologna; and Romeo Pepoli, who was aiming at the "lordship," persuaded the senate to open negotiations with the seceders. After a long parley, in which the Pope intervened on the side of the students, the city was compelled to agree that the Podestà should "receive discipline" in the Dominican church and that the citizens should build a chapel, to be called St. Mary of Scholars, "in expiation of their fault." The students returned in October, 1322, for the autumn term; but their relations with the citizens continued strained for a time, and the famous canonist d'Andrea—the uncle of the abducted lady—who had doubtless taken her father's part, in defiance of the statutes recently drafted by his own hand, was compelled by his unpopularity to withdraw to Padua for three years. It is not credible that Petracco should have chosen this time of disorder to send his two boys—the younger only fifteen years of age—to a distant University[3]; and if they entered it

[1] By the statutes of the University no clerk or layman could decline the jurisdiction of the Rector, if cited before him by the other party (Rashdall, I. 183). But it is doubtful if this applied to citizens who were not students (see I. 179).

[2] Rashdall, I. 175; Sismondi, *Républiques Italiennes*, IV. 18, 19. Sismondi, however, places the secession a year too early and associates the return of the students with the exile of Pepoli, which took place soon after the migration.

[3] Such is the view of F. Lo Parco, which I have discussed and rejected in Excursus III.

twelve months later, according to the received date, he would no doubt make personal arrangements for their course of study.

After the foregoing incident it should perhaps be explained that in the Middle Ages Bologna was a University of *Students*—not a University of *Masters* or Doctors. It has been well said that this " Student-University " " formed a wholly new departure in the history of education ; the institution is as distinct from anything which preceded it as it is unlike any of the modern institutions which have nevertheless developed out of it." [1] It had its own Council and officers, of whom the two Rectors were the chief. Each was elected for two years, and had to be twenty-four years of age and at least in minor orders. In its origin the association was a " guild " (collegium) ; and according to Roman Law every trade or profession had a right to form a " collegium " and to elect magistrates. The Doctors, too, had their " collegia " —two in number (that is, of Canon and Civil Law). It was only gradually, and through special circumstances, that the Students' Guild obtained control in Academic affairs, and merely by accident that it appropriated the term " University." Naturally the Professors at first denied the right of the students to form a guild, maintaining that they were only " apprentices " and did not constitute a " profession." But in course of time the Students' Guild became all-powerful, and ruled the whole community, except with regard to " Inception " (examination for degrees). As against the Professors the position was won by the students boycotting the lectures of those who opposed their rights. At first the Professors were merely " private adventurers "—like the Sophists and Rhetors of antiquity—who were hired by the students to give them instruction. Afterwards salaries were introduced to lessen the temptation to secession so natural in the case of famous teachers ; and to the two " chairs " established in 1289 the students elected by ballot. By the statutes Professors had to take an oath of obedience to the Rectors, though some maintained it was only to them as " magistrates " and not to the University as a whole. The Italian law-student lived as an independent gentleman ; the idea of discipline associated with the school or the cloister was absent, except so far as it was

[1] Rashdall, I. Chap. IV. p. 151. I am greatly indebted to this admirable writer for the information given below.

enjoined by his guild; the authority even of the Church was scarcely felt, unless by those—and they were many—who were already in orders.

But the students needed the protection of their guild not so much against their accredited teachers as against oppression by the City magnates. In all the Italian republics the citizens might count upon far juster treatment than the alien; so far at least their citizenship was an imitation of the "Civitas Romana." The statutes of Bologna provide that no student may be tortured except in the presence of a Rector and with his sanction. We may be sure, as were his fellow-students, that no capital sentence would have been enforced against Valenza—at least with such indecent haste—if he had happened to be a citizen. It was for this reason that natives of Bologna and Professors were excluded from the Student-University. They did not need its protection, for none were allowed to be Professors, or even Doctors, unless they had obtained the citizenship.[1] We have seen in the first chapter the immense authority wielded in Florence by the merchant-guilds; so we need not be surprised that the magistrates, even of a guild of foreigners, whose presence conduced so much to Bologna's prosperity, were able to assert a power that was almost independent of the city judges. Without it the position of foreign students would have soon become intolerable. And when that power was flouted, the students had one supreme and most effectual remedy—that of migration. Against the secession of Professors the city statutes tried to make some provision by fines, or even—though unsuccessfully—by administration of an oath; against a wholesale migration of students they were powerless. The remedy was applied at least three times in the thirteenth century, and resulted in increased prestige to the Student-University. Already in the fourteenth century there had been four migrations, in one of which (1306) the "Studium" was suspended for three years; this resulted in the establishment of a rival at Perugia, which was reinforced by the migration of 1321. A certain proportion of teachers usually accompanied the migrating students; and the oath which they

[1] In 1397 we find the membership of the College of Doctors restricted to Bologna citizens (Rashdall, I. p. 215). But in earlier times the rule was less stringent. In 1257 the Doctors were compelled to swear that they would not prevent foreign doctors elected by the students from filling a chair.

took to the Rectors bound them to migration in certain defined circumstances. In a later secession of 1338 the students elected six of their own number to chairs; and on their return these teachers were acknowledged by the Doctors' College.

By the middle of the thirteenth century the Students' Association existed in two divisions—Citramontanes and Ultramontanes. The former comprised three "nations"—Tuscans, Lombards and Romans; the latter consisted of fourteen or sixteen, of which Provence was one. But probably Francesco and his brother belonged to the first "nation" in the first division, since their family belonged to Florentine territory. The "nation" was a kind of club, formed for recreation, mutual assistance and corporate attendance at religious services. Originally the two divisions were almost separate "Universities," but within half a century they were practically interfused; they had a common seal, common statutes, and common congregations, and though the Rectors were separate, they had co-ordinate jurisdiction. The constitution was democratic, since the Rectors and their Council were merely executive officers; only the vote of the University could restore a Doctor who had been deposed. They could inflict fines and other penalties, but were not allowed to remit them; their decrees had to be enforced by the Podestà and his officers. They took precedence over all other ecclesiastics —even Cardinals—except the Legate and the Bishop of Bologna. Their expenses were considerable, as each had to keep two servants in livery, and their only salary was half the fines. A wealthy student, when elected, was compelled to accept office; he could not leave the city without the consent of his Council, and if he did so, must deposit security for his return. The "Congregation" of the University, which consisted of all students living at their own expense, generally met at some convent or church, and, on great occasions, at the cathedral; the usual place was the Dominican convent, where the seal was kept. Members must not be absent without the leave of their Rector; and in order to prevent brawls they were forbidden to carry arms —even a stiletto. The presiding Rector had the power of closure, and the voting must be by ballot.

There were not many disciplinary statutes at Bologna; but the University had secured complete control over two important classes—the landlords of the students and the various members

of the book-trade, which included copyists, illuminators, correctors, binders and makers of parchment. Each Faculty had its official "stationarii," who were rather "keepers of a lending library" than booksellers properly so called; although, when new works were produced by Doctors and others, the "stationarius" became the agent for the author and charged a fixed commission, of which author and purchaser each paid a part. The "loaning" of the texts prescribed by the two Law Faculties was most strictly regulated. For a complete text the prices were high—for the "Digest" as much as thirty-two "solidi," apparently for an unlimited term; but in order to lessen the expense to students, these texts were divided into "peciæ" of two sheets, with eight columns (each with sixty-two lines) to the sheet, and "quaternes" of four similar sheets. The lending rate was two denarii for a "pecia" and four for a "quaterne"[1] (in Petrarch's time probably doubled); and the student had to leave an equivalent pledge to secure the lender against loss. Presumably all would be obliged to have these texts at lectures on the various books. It was therefore of the first importance that they should contain no errors, and all students were bound to point out such errors on pain of perjury. The University appointed six "peciarii" whose duty it was periodically to revise these texts, and the "stationarius" was fined five solidi for each incorrect copy.[2] Besides the official "stationarii," there were others who had a licence to sell books, but all books above a certain value must be sold in the presence of a notary. The sale of books, however, was much impeded by a rule that no student, on leaving Bologna, must take books with him, lest he should sell them elsewhere at a profit. Whether this applied only to prescribed texts is not so clear; but in 1334—eight years after Petrarch's departure—a statute was passed which allowed books to be taken with the special permission of the authorities. The official "stationarii" were six in number—three Italians and three foreigners—and had to be appointed every year; they were obliged to stock sufficient supplies of 117 works specified by the various Faculties. The rental for books not on the official list

[1] Putnam, *Books and their Makers in the Middle Ages*, I. 186, 191.

[2] Rashdall, I. p. 191. Putnam gives this regulation, but he also says (I. p. 190) that from 1289 onwards the "stationarii" had to pay a fine of 100 lire (originally 10) for every copy in which glosses or unauthorized readings had been inserted.

was doubtless higher, as the preparation of copies would be more of a speculation. Each " stationarius " had to post up a list of the regulations in a conspicuous place in his shop.

Into this very unfamiliar world Petrarch was introduced in the autumn of 1323. Except for his dim memories of Genoa, Bologna was a far finer city than any he had yet seen. In his old age he says [1]: " I think nothing in the whole world could be pleasanter or more free than Bologna was then. You will remember the congregation of the students—its order and watchful care—and also the preceptors, who, you might suppose, were the divine jurists of the past." The city was not, of course, the arcaded Bologna that we know to-day, for it was much embellished in the next two centuries by the ruling families of Pepoli and Bentivoglio. But neither was it the city of narrow, winding streets, with hideous houses supported by beams and props, which existed in the thirteenth century.[2] New squares had been opened, many streets made wider, and a better class of building introduced. The newly erected palaces of the Commune and the Podestà were among the finest in Italy. The town is said to have had two hundred towers to which Petrarch alludes [3]—many of them doubtless the mediæval strongholds of wealthy citizens. But though these have been mostly swept away, the two leaning towers of Asinelli and Garisenda remain to-day as they had been then for two centuries, the most prominent feature of the city. The distant view of it has been compared to a ship, of which Asinelli (300 feet high) is the mainmast and Garisenda [4]—ten feet out of the perpendicular—the chain. Tradition asserts that in the shadow of the latter, then much higher, Dante composed some of his great poem; he compares the giant's stooping figure in Hell to this tower when the clouds are sailing over it.[5] Petrarch describes the town walls as ruinous or non-existent; but the defences were subsequently strengthened, and the city was renowned for its twelve gates. The surrounding plain is one of the most fertile in Italy and gained for Bologna the epithet of " La Grassa " (The Fat).

[1] *Sen.* X. 2.

[2] C. Segré, *La Patria poetica di F. P.* in *Nuova Antologia*, July, 1904, pp. 177–194.

[3] *Sen.* X. 2.

[4] Dr. Toynbee, perhaps following Dante's correct text, spells it " Carisenda," but he allows it was built by F. and O. Garisendi. The latter form is in use to-day.

[5] *Inferno*, XXXI. 136–142.

In the fourteenth century the University, despite its world-wide fame, had no buildings of its own ; indeed, these were not erected till two hundred years later. One of Petrarch's first duties was to matriculate [1] before the Rector at his private house, when he was enrolled in his " nation," took the oath of obedience, and paid a fee of twelve " solidi." His next step would be to find some other newcomers, if possible of the same " nation," who would join him in renting a house. For this purpose others besides the two brothers and Gui Sette would be needed—among them probably a scholar from Messina, with tastes similar to his own, named Tommaso Caloria, who would rank among the Tuscans and was afterwards one of his most valued friends. He might have the help of one of the four University agents (*proxenetæ*) in finding a house ; and there would be no dispute about rent, for a Board of four Taxors—two each from the University and the town—had already fixed the amount with the landlord, and any attempt to raise it would be punished by the house being interdicted to students for five years. Arrangements as to furniture and servants would be left to the students themselves. If they were too poor to take a house, they might live in approved lodgings in the town. There were " colleges " also for this poorer class—charitable institutions intended almost entirely for clerks—where there was some approach to a monastic rule. The " college " of Avignon had been founded in 1267 for eight students, of whom three were to be canons of the cathedral. But probably these were exclusively for students in Canon Law.

Some of Petrarch's early biographers,[2] in ignorance or disregard of his own plain statements, assert that he studied Canon Law. Undoubtedly many " canonists " acquired a smattering of Civil Law as an introduction to their own special branch of the science. But the reverse was by no means true ; and the idea may have originated in a false tradition that he had among his teachers famous Professors of Canon Law. It was the regular custom for each student to choose the Professor whose lectures

[1] " Matriculation " was originally peculiar to student-universities (Rashdall, I. p. 218).

[2] Of the first seven in A. Solerti's edition of the early lives (Milan, 1904) Domenico Bandini is the only one who mentions Canon Law. He was followed by Squarzafico, Beccadelli and Tomasini ; while Longiano and Daniello say that he studied both Civil and Canon Law. De Sade is undecided, but he mentions the Decretals among P.'s subjects of study .

he would attend, unless this were done for him by his parents or guardians. He would hardly have taken his house—perhaps only just arrived at his inn—when he would receive a visit from some touting lecturer (or student employed by the same for a commission) to solicit attendance at his lectures. The demeanour of the latter would be tactful and obsequious ; but the practice was discouraged at many Universities, and the statutes of some provide that no fee was to be payable at first. At Bologna the scholar in " Arts " was allowed fifteen days to make up his mind ; and the jurist Odofredus (1265) advises students to follow their own opinion and not the prayers or inducements of another.[1] The lectures were given either in a separate room of the Professor's house divided from the rest by a wall, or in a school rented for the purpose. Each lecturer had a special " Bedel " or attendant (paid by the students) who carried in his books, swept the room twice a month, and strewed the floor with straw. The Professor was liable to be interrupted by the University " Bedel " summoning him to the Rector or reading the latter's proclamations. He lectured seated to the students, sitting at sloping desks and all clothed in the " cappa " or hooded gown, which they were obliged to wear on pain of a fine of three Bologna lire. Whether this obligation extended to the streets or the adjacent country is not explained, but probably this was the case. The lectures were delivered in Latin, which was (at least theoretically) the language of ordinary student life. At that time ecclesiastical Latin at least was a living language, though confined to the clerical class.

Lectures were either " ordinary "—on the Code or the old Digest—or " extraordinary "—on the Institutes and Novels of Justinian. The distinction seems arbitrary, for the two subjects were equally important. But they were delivered at different times—the " ordinary " in the morning and the " extraordinary " in the afternoon ; and while the " ordinary " lectures were confined to Doctors, the " extraordinary " might be given by advanced students called " Bachelors." A specially difficult or celebrated law might be reserved for a " repetition " in the evening.

[1] The same jurist, however, refused to give " extraordinary " lectures for a year on the ground that the students were not good payers ; they wished to know, not to pay.

From the extant regulations we can reconstruct the " day " of the Bologna student. Ordinary lectures began at 7 a.m. and lasted till 9. The time from 9 to 1.30 was left for dinner and a siesta ; in the afternoon there were one or two " extraordinary " lectures (in the winter, 2 p.m. to 4 and 4 to 5.30 ; in the summer, 1.30 p.m. to 3 and 3 to 5). The evenings were free, unless there was a " repetition." But a Doctor might give these in " extraordinary " hours whenever he pleased ; and each in turn had to give a " repetition " on some day when there was no " ordinary " lecture. The rule was for a student to attend " ordinary " lectures three times a week, but whether they were marked for attendance is not stated. Odofredus gives a plan of one of his own courses, which was as follows : (1) A summary of the exact title and purport of each law ; (2) the reading of the text with a view to correction ; (3) an explanation of apparent contradictions or difficult problems suggested by each law.[1] The dictation of " ordinary " lectures was forbidden ; extant specimens are familiar and conversational. The Doctors were bound to answer questions in writing and discuss points with their class. Indeed, to judge by the statutes, they were very much kept in order by their scholars.

If a Professor wanted a single day off, he had to ask first his own students, and then the Rectors and Council. He might not create holidays, for which there was a fine of forty " solidi," and his pupils were bound to inform against him on pain of perjury. If he failed to secure an audience of five for an " ordinary " or three for an " extraordinary " lecture, he was treated as absent and fined accordingly.[2] If he left the town, he had to deposit a security for his return. Punctuality was rigidly enforced. The Professor must begin when the bell of St. Peter's rang for mass under a penalty of twenty " solidi " for each offence, though he may begin earlier ; he must not go on one minute after the bell for " tierce," and if the students remained, they were fined ten " solidi." He was fined if he skipped a chapter or decretal, and he might not postpone any difficulty to the end of the lecture, lest that be made an excuse for evasion. At

[1] He makes no mention of glosses, but by the statutes these must be read directly after the text.

[2] Sometimes a Professor had to bribe students to attend his lectures, or he made an arrangement by which they attended in turn.

Bologna it was a sign of dissent or ironic applause to "bang books" at the lecturer.[1]

The law-texts were divided into sections known as "puncta," and he must reach each "punctum" by a certain date. At the beginning of the academic year he had to deposit ten Bologna lire with a banker, from which his fines were deducted by the Rectors. There was a committee of students called "Denunciatores Doctorum"—appointed, according to the statutes, for the Doctors' spiritual good. The law books were divided among the Professors, so that all subjects might be lectured on within two, or, at most, four years. In Petrarch's time many of the Professors were salaried; but there were probably also fees for each course, which were collected by delegated students. In Lent there were public disputations with a Rector presiding, at which a Doctor maintained some thesis against all comers. There were also student-disputations on holidays with a Doctor for president.[2] There are said to have been about ninety holidays in the academic year, not counting the Thursdays and Sundays in each week. But apparently Thursday was only a holiday when there was no recognized festival in the week, and then there might be disputations and repetitions. Doctors were forbidden to lecture on Saints' days, though students might do so. We may presume that students in this connexion meant all who had not yet taken the degree of Doctor.

The length of the course was one year less in Canon than in Civil Law. After five years' study in the former and after six years' in the latter, a student might lecture, if licensed by his Rector, on a Decretal or a book of Civil Law. The licence was practically the completion of his course; it made him a "Bachelor" and entitled him to lecture twice a week and to give "repetitions"—if he could obtain an audience, which for some might be a difficult matter. A year later he might proceed to the Doctorate in his Faculty; but he had to wait three years more before he could become a "Doctor utriusque juris"—*i.e.*

[1] Rashdall, I. 605.

[2] We know from a note in his MS. of Quintilian (at Book XII. c. 5, § 6), that Petrarch took his share in these "student-disputations." They consisted—as was apparently the case in the Roman schools—in pleading a fictitious case before an audience with another student for an opponent. P.'s note says: "Hoc in jure civili pueri faciebamus." The word "pueri" need not (as M. de Nolhac seems to think, II. 94) prove that the exercise was confined to Montpellier; P. uses it not seldom of his Bologna period.

a Doctor in both Faculties. The College of Doctors examined for the degrees, and in the infancy of the University performed the ceremony of admission; but in 1219 Honorius III. decided that the admission belonged of right to the Archdeacon of Bologna. Seventy-three years later Nicholas IV. gave to Bologna Doctors the right to teach throughout the world—a concession which made them as much a separate order as priests or knights. But the degree was often taken, as in modern Universities, by those who did not intend to teach; the Doctorate in either Faculty—but especially in Canon Law—was a distinction coveted by bishops, and even by cardinals. With the ceremonies of "Inception" we are not concerned, since Petrarch did not reside long enough to take a degree.

We have scarcely sufficient material to form an opinion upon the value of the lectures or of the whole course of study. No doubt many of the Professors were lamentably ignorant of classical antiquity, and still more of the limits to the practical application of the Code in different parts of Italy and of Southern Europe. But to the Jurist these were subsidiary matters; his supreme authority was the original text, which was jealously guarded and was made the subject of sound criticism. Journeys were often taken to Pisa to consult the great Codex,[1] which was regarded with supreme reverence. The golden age of Bologna was from Irnerius to Accursius, the last of the great "glossers"—*i.e.* from 1130 to 1280. During that period the text was firmly established, and the process of interpretation, by comparing and illustrating different laws, was gradually evolved upon a scientific basis. This process exercised the mediæval mind in its strongest points—as in its genius for subtlety, its passion for classification and definition, its reverence for the "litera scripta" as well as its love of pushing principles to their consequences and harmonizing contradictions at any cost. These points, as Dr. Rashdall rightly indicates, are still characteristic of a great legal intellect. But with the opening of the fourteenth century came a decline. The work of the "glossers" was done; there remained only the far less fruitful task of "glossing the glosses." Thus

[1] This MS., now in the Laurentian library at Florence, was brought to Pisa from Amalfi in 1135, when the latter town was taken by Reger, King of Sicily, the ally of Pisa. It has now been proved that this was no new discovery, but that the Code of Justinian had been in vogue long before.

the Professor of Petrarch's day was apt to be smothered in a mass of citations from his predecessors and their commentaries—and this without any compensating advantage of increased scholarship or forensic experience. For the time all progress ceased; the teachers, misled by the example of the philosophers and theologians, degenerated into mere legal schoolmen. Later in the century the University produced some famous names, as Bartolus and Baldus; their renown, however, was due not to scholarship, but to greater practical experience and to their fertile subtlety in inventing and determining imaginary cases. Petrarch's distaste for the study, of which we shall presently give his own account, may have been caused not merely by natural repugnance, but by the inferior quality of the teaching.

Who were the Professors at whose feet he sat during those delightful but, as he afterwards thought, wasted years? Some well-known Professors have been suggested by de Sade and others; but further research has shown that though later in life Petrarch knew, or may have known, some of these, they were either not at Bologna in his student days or they did not teach his special subject. He himself mentions [1] having discussed his abandonment of Law with Oldrado da Ponte of Lodi, a "doctor utriusque juris" of great renown. Oldrado had taught at Padua not long before Petrarch went to Bologna, but there is no proof that he ever lectured at the greater University. He was advocate of the Consistory at Avignon from 1322 to his death in 1335, and he probably knew Petrarch there during his later years. We have already mentioned Giovanni d'Andrea, who was called "famosissimus doctor" and "the trumpet and father of the Canon Law." We know that he was absent from Bologna between the secessions of 1322 and 1326—*i.e.* during the whole time of Petrarch's stay—when he was teaching at Padua; and if he had been at Bologna, he would have lectured not on Civil, but on Canon Law. He became acquainted with the poet after the latter's return to Avignon—probably in 1328, when he was charged with a mission from the Pope's nephew, Cardinal Pouget.

Petrarch's letters, *F.* IV. 15 and 16, to a Bolognese professor, exposing some of his mistakes in scholarship, were supposed by de Sade and Fracassetti without much foundation to have been

[1] *F.* IV. 16 *ad fin.*

addressed to d'Andrea. Three other letters,[1] which are undoubtedly to d'Andrea, are written with more deference; but neither in these nor in the disputed letters does he state expressly that he had been the pupil of his correspondent.[2] It has been suggested that "the reproved Professor" was one Raniero Arsendi da Forli, who had taught in Civil Law at Bologna in 1324 and a quarter of a century later had removed to Padua, where he may have met Petrarch again in that year (1349).[3] The conjecture is admissible, though it cannot be considered proved; the question will be more fully discussed on a later page.[4] Of Raniero little is known—so little, indeed, that it is difficult to recognize him in Petrarch's flattering description—"sole chief of that department of letters to which you are devoted."[5] He certainly lectured in Civil Law during Petrarch's stay, as also did Pietro de' Cerniti; and—if the former were the Professor of the disputed letters—his fondness for rolling off the names of ancient authors before an amazed class, which considered him "omniscient," may be a personal reminiscence. Giovanni d'Andrea was not devoid of the same pretentiousness, but his fame was far greater. The story[6] that his handsome daughter Novella used to lecture in his stead, screened off by a curtain lest the sight of her beauty should discompose her class, is rendered even less probable by the fact that at fourteen she became the wife of Filippo Formaglini. She was therefore not married, as so often stated, to the famous canonist Giovanni Calderini. But the ladies of d'Andrea's family were all distinguished for intellectual power. He used to consult his wife Milancia on questions of law; and his daughter Bettina, the wife of G. da San Giorgio, was one of the few Italians of her day who had some knowledge of Greek. Her father was rich and most generous

[1] *F.* V. 7, 8, 9.

[2] He may possibly imply it in *F.* IV. 15, where he refers to his earlier letters to the professor as written "*pæne pueriliter, ut qui vixdum ferulæ manum subduxeram*"; but as the rod was not used at Bologna, this is merely metaphorical.

[3] F. Lo Parco, *Mæstri Canonisti attribuiti al P.*, in *Revue de Bibliothèques*, t. XVI. pp. 301–315. His statements that P.'s correspondent was not living at Bologna at the time, and that P. met him at Padua in 1349, are conjectures, not facts; the letters themselves afford no evidence.

[4] See Chap. XII. (Vol. II.).

[5] *F.* IV. 15.

[6] Related by Bayle in his *Dictionary* from Christine de Pise.

to the poor; and Petrarch may have become acquainted with some of the family, if not with its head, during his Bologna residence. For we know that his "preceptor"—the Professor who superintended his studies—was Tommaso da Formaglini (the uncle of Novella's husband) who was a lecturer in Civil Law.

Two other teachers, who may have been at Bologna at the same time, were Guittoncino de' Sinibaldi, usually called "Cino da Pistoia," and Francesco Stabili, better known as "Cecco d'Ascoli." Cino was born about 1270, and was thus five years younger than Dante, who was his friend, exchanged sonnets with him and praises his merits in the *De Vulgari Eloquio*.[1] Unlike Petrarch, he succeeded in combining a competent knowledge of the Civil Law, on which at one time he lectured at Bologna as a Doctor, with the cultivation of a strong lyrical gift. That Petrarch knew him seems almost certain from the tone of the sonnet in which he laments his death in 1337.[2] But it has lately been shown[3] that between the years 1321 and 1326 Cino made Siena his headquarters, having probably remained there when the seceding students returned to Bologna. But the distance between the towns is not great, and no doubt he often visited his numerous friends at the University. On his monument in his native city there is a bas-relief by a Pistoian sculptor, representing Cino lecturing to nine pupils, of whom Petrarch is certainly one. There may have been a tradition at Pistoia to this effect; and Angelo Colocci (sixteenth century) asserts that letters passed between the two poets, though none are now extant. We must say something later of the influence upon Petrarch of the Bolognese school of poetry[4]; it is in this department rather than in his regular studies that Cino is likely to have been his teacher. The Pistoian poet possessed a sound knowledge of the Latin classics; and his fame was already so widespread that Petrarch is certain to have sought his acquaintance. We have no proof that Petrarch had already begun to write Italian poetry; but, outside the lecture-room, his native Tuscan was the language of the University, and, whether consciously or unconsciously, he was obtaining a mastery of the idiom and gradually

[1] *V.E.* I. 17; II. 2, 6.

[2] Sonnet 71 (*Piangete, Donne, e con voi pianga Amore*).

[3] By Chiapelli in his history of the University; C. Segré, *op. cit.* n. 2, p. 115.

[4] For this and for Cino's apocryphal letter to P. see below, Chap. VI. pp. 219, 220.

forming a correct taste. The Tuscan " nation " then had a great preponderance over other Italians, and for a long time native poetry had been in fashion among them. In the previous century many troubadours went to Bologna and attached themselves to that " nation " in order to acquire the idiom ; and the compliment was returned, for we hear of Italians, like Rambertino da Bavalelli, attempting to write *canzoni* in Provençal. The " furor poeticus " had even invaded the professions ; for in the " Memorials " of 1324 is preserved a poem by a notary, Ugolina da Quercis.[1] An introduction to Cino would have placed Petrarch *en rapport* with all this throbbing poetic life, and, if he was offered the chance, he would assuredly not decline it.

An acquaintance, if not a friend, of Cino, was the astrologer, physician, poet and freethinker, usually named from his birthplace, " Cecco d'Ascoli." When Petrarch matriculated at Bologna, he was Professor of Astrology, and had been directed by the statutes to supply " judgments " gratis to inquiring students. He seems to have combined this so-called " science " with medicine and made it his business to warn his patients of their " critical days " when the stars were adverse. Our poet may have known him slightly, but it can scarcely have been he who foretold that Petrarch would be sought and honoured by great men.[2] In later life the latter displayed a strong antipathy both to medicine and astrology ; and if he had recourse to Cecco, it would be to the poet rather than to the man of science. Yet the sonnet in praise of Cecco which was once ascribed to him is now known to be by another hand.[3] Cecco's dry scientific poem *L'Acerba* (written about this time) is full of backbiting sarcasm against Dante,[4] who had recently died at Ravenna and had once been personally known to his conceited detractor. Cecco, though himself an astrologer, has the hardihood to rebuke Dante for his fatalism, and even to hint that for his heterodoxy he is suffering the flames of hell. But the accusation may have been

[1] C. Segré, *Nuova Antologia*, July, 1904, from whom I borrow most of these details.

[2] Fuzet, *Pétrarque*, p. 21. The reference is to *F.* XXIII. 2 (Frac. III. 163, 164).

[3] It begins, " *Tu se'l grande Ascolan che'l mondo allumi*," and is now known to be by Muccio of Ravenna.

[4] Gaspary compares the professor to " a pigmy in doctoral spectacles " attacking a giant (*Storia della Lett. Ital.*, translated by Zingarelli, p. 300).

due to the fact that the accuser himself [1] was under suspicion. He had already been denounced to the Inquisition at Bologna as a heretic; and in 1324 he was compelled to vacate his chair, to give up his astrological books and to attend sermons at the Dominican church on Sundays.[2] He was soon permitted to withdraw to Florence, where he became astrologer to Charles, Duke of Calabria. But here a more terrible retribution awaited him. He was again denounced, handed over to the secular arm and burnt alive before the Porta alla Croce on September 16, 1327. A generation later he was represented by Andrea Orcagna in a fresco (now lost) on the walls of Santa Croce as undergoing the same punishment which he assigned to Dante.[3]

We scarcely know more of Petrarch's associates and fellow-students at Bologna than we know of his teachers. His dearest friend—who, as stated above, was probably an inmate of his house along with his brother and Gui Sette—was Tommaso Caloria of Messina, a student of his own age, who shared his preference for "the humanities" over legal studies and, like himself, was applying his "prentice-hand" to Italian poetry. Petrarch testifies to the "incredible concord of will" [4] which existed between them, and in a tribute to Tommaso in the *Triumph of Love* speaks of him as one "without whom he knew not how to move a step." [5] Others with whom he maintained or renewed his friendship in later years were Luca Cristiano,[6] who afterwards entered the priesthood, and Giovanni da Rimini, who exchanged letters with him after twenty years.[7] At this time he was not personally known to Giacomo Colonna, who was his senior and was finishing his course in Canon Law. But the latter knew him by sight and was struck with his appearance,

[1] G. Carducci, *Studi Letterari*, p. 169.

[2] Tiraboschi, t. V. Chap. II. 15, quoted in Renan, *Averroisme* (Paris, 1866), p. 328.

[3] See the description in Vasari's *Lives of the Painters* (Bohn), I. 210.

[4] "Incredibilis identitas voluntatum," according to the Paris MS. of *F.* IV. 10.

[5] "Senza'l qual non sapea movere un passo," *Triomfo d'Am.* III. 63.

[6] It is now known that "Olympius," to whom he speaks in *F.* VIII. 7 of their studies together at Bologna, was Luca Cristiano, not Mainardo Accursio, as Fracassetti supposed. He called Mainardo "Simplicianus," as we learn from the Paris MS. of the Letters. M. A. may, of course, as Fracassetti conjectures, have been connected with the jurist family of that name; but they were Bolognese by adoption, if not by origin, while he was a Florentine and "literarum expers."

[7] See the extract from P.'s letter (*F.* IX. 8) at the end of this chapter.

as we learn from a letter of his old age.[1] Petrarch at this time was perhaps too swarthy to be handsome; but he had eyes of piercing brightness, which lighted up his mobile features and intelligent expression. He would be in student dress—a tunic with a hood, over which was a black coat or cloak, closed at the sides and fastened by a brooch at the neck, while a cap of white down was drawn over his dark chestnut hair. We can fancy him taking the lead of a party of half a dozen as they roamed over the fertile plain on the numerous holidays. He has preserved in the letter [2] to Gui Sette, so often quoted, a memory of those delightful days:

"I had but just entered on my young manhood, and was more enterprising than I had been or should have been. You remember how far we used to wander on holidays—so far that twilight often found us in the fields, and we used to return in the dead of night. The gates lay open; or if perchance they were shut, there was no wall—only a weak fence, ruinous with age, surrounded the courageous city; instead of one, there were many ways of getting in, nor was there need of walls or towers or bulwarks or armed sentinels at night."

The description seems to imply that there were fixed hours for students to return, but that the "enterprising" youths took little heed of them or found them easy to evade. The disciplinary rules of the University concerned themselves with student recreations rather within than without the city bounds. But it was neither the age nor the country for outdoor amusements, except those in fashion with noble and wealthy families, as jousting, hunting and hawking, which were too expensive for the ordinary student. The statutes of Narbonne forbade playing with a ball or a bat as an "insolent" game. At Bologna, however, the absence of games produced the "insolence" of brawlers, which had to be strictly restrained. The most prevalent vice was gambling, which was suppressed as far as possible. Neither students nor Doctors might enter gaming-houses in the town; and it was an offence even to watch a game played with dice in public. Games of chess and "tabulæ" (perhaps draughts) were allowed in private houses, and even playing for stakes; but a student must not gamble in his own house three months before going home or one month before his degree. This provision was

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 1. (Frac.). [2] *Sen.* X. 2.

perhaps to prevent the piling up of "debts of honour." The Bolognese were hospitable folk and fond of rich banquets; restrictions were therefore made upon private entertainments by students. It is to be feared that their morals were less carefully protected; at least, we read that courtesans were numerous, and, in spite of the prohibition of the statutes, used to visit the students' houses. Some have supposed that Petrarch's second sonnet (*Per fare una leggiadria sua vendetta*) alludes to amours of this period. No doubt he was very susceptible of the tender passion; but we have no proof that at this time it affected his outward conduct.

The vacations of the University seem short to our modern ideas; but this was perhaps necessary owing to the number of "whole holidays" in term. The autumn long vacation extended only from September 7[1] to the High Mass on St. Luke's Day (October 18); besides this there were ten days at Christmas, fourteen at Easter, three at the Carnival and two at Whitsuntide. Plainly the two brothers and their friend could not go home even for the autumn six weeks; once at least (probably in that vacation in 1324) Petrarch went on a tour in Northern Italy with his "preceptor"—no doubt Tommaso da Formaglini. It was Petrarch's first introduction to Venice, where he spent so many of his later years. We learn the fact from the later letter already often quoted,[2] in which he is "laudator temporis acti":

"The city of Venice, though, from its position and the policy of its citizens, it is in a secure and happy condition, was once yet more prosperous—I mean at the time when I first came as a youth to visit it from Bologna with my preceptor. You may hear even its inhabitants admit this, though I grant that it has greatly increased in the number of its buildings."

The visit took place in the latter part of the reign of the doge Giovanni Soranzo, under whom the power of the famous Council of Ten was consolidated and extended. It was a period of tranquillity in external affairs, in which the rivalry of Genoa, so disastrous thirty years later, was successfully met.

We can reconstruct by fairly plausible conjecture this tour of

[1] I follow Rashdall (I. 221) in the text; Lo Parco in *Il Petrarca nel Casentino* (*Rivista d'Italia*, April, 1906, p. 598) says August 15.

[2] *Sen.* X. 2 (B ed. 964), written from Venice probably in 1368. In the same letter he mentions having seen Padua in his student days.

Petrarch's youth. He would travel to Venice by way of Ferrara and Padua, crossing the Po about three miles north of the former, and the Adige about the same distance from Rovigo. This route would take him through Este, and six miles further he would have on his left the Euganean Hills and Arquà, where after half a century he was to find his last resting-place. There is good reason to suppose that the return journey to Bologna was made by a different and more circuitous route. We know from two casual allusions [1] made long afterwards that in the days of his youth Petrarch visited the coast district of Emilia—particularly Rimini and the neighbourhood of Pesaro. This may, of course, have been a different expedition,[2] but it more probably belongs to the same journey, since in the autumn of 1325 war would have made travelling unsafe. Leaving Venice, the party would go by boat through the lagoon to Chioggia, and thence by the coast road through Lorco and Ravenna to Rimini and perhaps to Pesaro. If this route were taken, Petrarch may have stood by the grave of Dante in the Minorite church of Ravenna within three years of the latter's death. It has been proved [3] that during those years Bologna was the centre of a circle of warm admirers of the sovereign poet. His "poetical correspondent," Giovanni da Virgilio, had recently been a professor in the University; while his patron, Guido Novello da Polenta, who had delivered his funeral eulogy, had been ousted from the lordship of Ravenna by his treacherous cousin Ostasio and was now living at Bologna. It would not be strange if Petrarch's mind in this part of the tour were full of veneration for his father's famous friend. Passing on to Rimini, he was shown a stone in what is now the Piazza Giulio Cesare, which, according to tradition, was the "suggestum," or pedestal, from which Cæsar harangued his troops immediately after the passage of the Rubicon.[4] If we

[1] In *Vita Cæsaris*, c. 21 (Razzolini's ed. of *De Viris Illustribus*, Vol. III. p. 464), and in *Var.* 9 (to Pandolfo Malatesta, lord of Pesaro. "Ipse aliqua puer vidi").

[2] Lo Parco (*op. cit.* p. 601) imagines a long and lonely journey by P. in the spring of 1325 to Florence, Incisa and Arezzo, ending with a trip to the source of the Arno. Yet in speaking of his visit to his birthplace in December, 1350 (*Sen.* XIII. 3), P. seems very distinctly to imply that he had not been there since he left it as an infant.

[3] Lo Parco (*op. cit.*), pp. 608, 609.

[4] "Lapis me puero ostendebatur foro medio," *Vit. Cæs.* c. 21. Generally P. speaks of himself in the Bologna period as "adolescens," but sometimes also as "puer." (Cf. the MS. note in P.'s *Vegetius*, mentioned

are to take literally Petrarch's description in the Fourth Eclogue,[1] it must have been at this time that he visited that part of the Apennines, dividing Emilia from Tuscany, which was the watershed of the two great rivers Tiber and Arno. He feigns that, while plunged in mournful meditation among those woods of the Casentino, he was visited by a shadowy personage named "Dædalus,"[2] who presented him with a wondrous lyre, to the strains of which he had ever since been wont to sing. I am inclined to think that not only the interview, but the scene in which he places it is imaginary[3]; but the description may be based on some spot in the Apennines seen during the return from this tour.

A document discovered not long ago in the notarial archives of Bologna[4] throws light on Petrarch's circumstances soon after this journey. It recites that Tommaso da Formaglini, Doctor of Laws, and Francesco, son of Pietro, who was of Florence and now resides at Avignon, promise to pay to Bonfiglolo da Zambecaria the sum of two hundred "pounds" within a month in return for ten "libræ venetorum grossorum," which the latter has lent them. Meanwhile the said Francesco swears not to depart from the territory of Bologna without leave from the said creditor and promises to indemnify the said Tommaso for

below.) Lo Parco (*op. cit.* p. 602) unaccountably supposes that the stone is at Forli, instead of at Rimini.

[1] Written, or at least sketched in outline, in the year 1346.

[2] The old commentaries (including that wrongly ascribed by Hortis to P. himself) say that Dædalus represents our Lord; but Lo Parco, following other critics (Mascetta Caracci and Della Torre) insists (*op. cit.*) that he is Dante. If I could feel as sure as he that by "Dædalus" is intended a poet, and not Christ, I should be inclined to accept this identification, because of the enthusiasm for Dante at Bologna. But I cannot see that the common interpretation is as "blasphemous" as he represents, and I doubt if P. would ever have considered Dante as the source of his Italian lyrical gift (cf. *F.* XXI. 15). I am at least sure that in P.'s *Bucolics* it is hopeless to distinguish between allegory and fact. Lo Parco takes the visit of Dædalus (*i.e.* Dante) to the Arezzo house at the time of P.'s birth "au pied de la lettre" (pp. 604, 605; cf. *Ecl.* IV. 29–37). I presume he would not take the apparition and the gift of the lyre in the Casentino in the same literal fashion. When he goes on to suggest that P.'s tears ("flebam," l. 19) were due to his approaching departure from Bologna (which Lo Parco himself places seven months later), and to the news about his stepmother, he is trifling with his readers. It is just as absurd to conclude from the "vernos flores" of l. 15 that the journey must have been in the spring.

[3] The neighbouring sources of the Tiber and the Arno may be chosen because P. was a Florentine by extraction and (since 1341) a Roman citizen by gift.

[4] The text, with a commentary, is given by C. Segré in *Studi Romanzi della Società Filologica Romana* (ed. Monaci), Vol. II. 97–103.

lending his name as security. The latter formality was no doubt necessary because Francesco was under age ; and the transaction shows that Tommaso was the " preceptor " who accompanied him on his vacation tour. For the Professors used to employ extra-academical means to increase their following of students, one of these being consent to lend their names as security in case of need.[1] The document is dated December 29, 1325 ; but as the Bologna year began with Christmas, it would be 1324 according to our reckoning. The failure of supplies from home often plunged mediæval scholars into acute distress. From this cause the poorest were sometimes reduced to beg ; and at Paris loan-chests were instituted by the University to relieve urgent cases. The chief money-lenders were Jews, who charged exorbitant rates of interest, of which the lowest was forty per cent. At Bologna such transactions were controlled by the appointment of four usurers or pawnbrokers, who were licensed to lend money to students at fixed rates.

It is useless to speculate on the reason for this loan, although the apparently high interest seems to show that the lender was a Jew. It may have been occasioned simply by extravagance or by the expenses of the tour three months before. But a note, discovered by M. de Nolhac at the beginning of Petrarch's MS. of the *De Civitate Dei*, appears to prove, if it be the poet's autograph, that he was at Avignon in the following February.[2] It may be thus translated : " In the month of February, in the year 1325, I bought this book, *De Civitate Dei*, from the executors of Cinthio, a chorister of Tours, for twelve florins." [3] Assuming that this is an autograph [4] (which is now scarcely disputed) and that there is no mistake in the date, we may find here a possible explanation of the loan.[5] For some reason—

[1] There is another act in the archives of 1324 of one Pietro di Vicenza, in which two Messina scholars of Formaglini's school were the chief debtors. This corroborates the supposition that P. was the debtor in the other, as his chief friend was from Messina.

[2] Pierre de Nolhac, *P. et l'Humanisme* (1907 ed. II. 196), and also *P. à Bologne*, in *P. e la Lombardia* (1904), pp. 85–94.

[3] " A.D. MIIICXXV. mense februario in Avinione emi istum librum ab exequutoribus d. Cinthii cantoris Turonensis pro pretio florenosium XII."

[4] Sabbadini seems to have proved this by comparison with P.'s list of books at Vaucluse. *Rendiconti dell R. Ist Lomb.* (Vol. XXXIX. (1906), pp. 369 *seqq.*).

[5] So M. de Nolhac thinks in the last work quoted in note 2, see p. 88 n. The question of the value of this loan is one of great interest with

which must have been urgent—Petrarch may have been summoned to Avignon about Christmas, 1324, and been forced to borrow the money for his journey, perhaps by his father's order. For such a journey there are only two reasons conceivable—either the serious illness or death of one of his parents, or a secession of students, in which his father did not wish he should take part. As to the first, it could not have been his father,[1] for, as we shall presently see, Petrarch was again at Bologna in the autumn of 1325; it may possibly have been his mother, who according to Squarzafico, died about a year before her husband. If it were so, we may gather from his elegy on his mother's death, that he and his brother were at least in time to be present at her funeral. With regard to the second reason, there was certainly a secession of students to Imola within four or five years of their return from Siena, in consequence of the execution of one of their number for homicide. But its exact date seems to be very uncertain[2]; and although Sig. Lo Parco, for reasons of his own, connects Petrarch's final departure with this secession, there is good ground for supposing that it did not occur till 1326,

regard to its object, but it is very difficult to determine. The following is a possible solution without allowing for depreciation, which would be practically incalculable. The "decem libræ of Venetian 'grossi'" were no doubt reckoned by *weight* (lbs. Troy), and not by tale, because the coins varied considerably in intrinsic value. As each "grosso" (a silver coin = 4 denarii) weighed (by standard weight) 44 grains, this would make about 1310 for the loan (or more, if the coins were debased), and since 25 "grossi" went to the Venetian gold ducat, the sum would equal in value about 52 of the latter coins (at a rough guess about £22 sterling). This should have been amply sufficient journey money for a visit of both brothers to Avignon. The question of the relation of the loan to the contracted repayment is more difficult still. It is not conceivable that the 200 "libræ" to be repaid within a month were also reckoned by weight, for that would make the interest fabulously high. These "libræ" were probably £ of Bologna, the value of which at the time must be purely conjectural. Perhaps the payment of the loan in Venetian money, which was widely current, is a sign that it was intended for use beyond Bolognese territory; and P. may have expected supplies within a month, which would satisfy his creditor. The provision that he must not quit Bologna was perhaps purely formal; and leave would be granted without difficulty. I am much indebted to Dr. F. P. Barnard for his help in the above calculation.

[1] As Mazzoni supposes in *Rivista Crit della Lett. Ital.* (February, 1890), fasc. 2.

[2] Lo Parco says it is placed in 1325 by Griffoni in his *Cronaca Bolognese*; but Ghirardacci (*Storia di Bologna*, II. 66) claims that he has proved it was in 1326, and Lo Parco's arguments against this are not convincing. Some give 1322, and Wicksteed and Gardner (*Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio*, p. 135 n.) place it in 1323. The two latter dates are most unlikely.

after he had quitted the University. I do not often agree with Lo Parco, but I think his suggestion that a " X " may have been dropped in the date in Petrarch's book is at least possible,[1] and that its purchase by him is far more likely in 1335. The " argument from silence " is notoriously untrustworthy ; and yet it seems strange that Petrarch, in his reminiscences of 1368, should have laid such stress upon the tranquillity of his sojourn, if it had been interrupted, or even cut short, by a wholesale secession of students. Nor do I think it probable that his father, several hundred miles away, would have made this a pretext for recalling his sons. The death of his mother would be a different matter. We know that she was wrapt up in her boys [2] ; and they may have understood from Petracco, on returning to Bologna, that their stay there was precarious.[3] I have discussed this question in an Excursus [4] ; and, on the whole, my conclusion is that the evidence for the mother's death in this year is incomplete, though it could not have taken place earlier.

However this be, Petrarch's works contain two allusions to current events in Italy, which undoubtedly took place in this year, as belonging to the period of his University career. The first is to the campaign of the Ghibelline forces under Azzo Visconti and Castruccio Castracani against the Guelfic league headed by Florence and Bologna—a campaign which culminated in the signal victory at Altopascio (September 13, 1325). In this battle the army of Florence under the Catalan general Cardona was utterly routed ; the " carroccio," or military car of the Republic, was captured, and a large number of prisoners, including Cardona, were taken. In an early historical work [5] Petrarch relates, as a story he had heard at the University, the marvellous escape of Azzo Visconti during that campaign from a viper, which had crept into his doffed helmet, and when he resumed it, crawled down his cheeks without harming him. The young Milanese commander would not suffer it to be killed, and, because a snake was part of his family crest, considered it an omen of the " double victory " which ensued. The second

[1] *Giornale Storico d'Lett. Ital.* XLVIII. p. 41.

[2] *Sen.* X. 2 (on the visit to Vaucluse) and elegy on his mother's death.

[3] That may be the meaning of his speaking of the death of both his parents as the reason of his leaving Bologna (in *Ep. Post.* and *Rer. Mem.* III.).

[4] On the date of her death see Excursus III.

[5] *Rer. Mem.* IV. Chap. IX. (De Portentis), in Bâle ed. p. 550.

victory of Azzo—in alliance with Mantua, Verona and Ferrara—took place nine weeks later (November 15, 1325) over the forces of Bologna only about fifteen miles from the city itself between Monteveglio and Zappolino. The Guelf army was completely defeated, losing 500 knights, and 1500 infantry killed or taken prisoners; its general, Malatestino da Rimini, the Podestà, and many principal citizens were among the captives. The victorious Ghibellines advanced to Panicale in the northern suburbs, and though they did not venture an assault upon the city itself, they showed their contempt for it, after the fashion of the day, by running three triumphant horse-races outside the gates.[1] If Petrarch's description of the "weak fence"[2] surrounding it is to be taken literally, the assault might have succeeded; but winter was close at hand, and the victors were content to retire. The only allusion by Petrarch to this event, which must have been an exciting moment of his life, is contained in a marginal note to his MS. copy of Vegetius, now in the Vatican, in which he says: "Recommendation not to change the disposition of troops in the height of battle. The neglect of this by the Bolognese generals caused a great slaughter of their citizens when I was there as a lad, in the course of my studies."[3] The Pistoian chronicler records the ravages and burning by the Mantuan and Milanese to the very foot of the ramparts of Bologna, the effects of which Petrarch must have seen, even if he did not actually behold these insults of the enemy.

I am strongly of opinion[4] that this marginal note conclusively settles the question of the time when Petrarch left Bologna in favour of the date indicated by himself[5] (April 26, 1326). The idea that the University was in such a "sad condition"[6] as to be on the point of breaking up in consequence of the above-mentioned invasion is not supported by history. The short secession to Imola—if it had taken place (which I do not believe)—must have come to an end before winter; and Petrarch is not likely to have left the University and undertaken a winter journey over the Alps without express orders from home, which

[1] G. Giulini, *Memorie di Milano* (Milan, 1771), Vol. X. p. 225.
[2] See above, p. 126.
[3] The text is in de Nolhac, *P. et l'Humanisme* (1907), Vol. II. 101.
[4] As is M. de Nolhac, *P. e la Lombardia*, p. 93.
[5] In *F.* IV. 1. See Excursus III.
[6] Lo Parco's expression in *Rivista d'Italia* (*op. cit.*), p. 599.

would take a long time to arrive. His earliest letter (*F.* I. 1, to Tommaso Caloria) is dated "Bologna, April 18," and probably belongs to the latest period of his residence. For his correspondent, who was of his own age [1] and his dearest college friend, had already left the University and was looking forward to a life of letters in distant Sicily. It contains nothing inconsistent [2] with the date of 1326, which has long been assigned to it.

This letter,[3] as Petrarch has finally edited it, is more of a rhetorical exercise than a "familiar epistle," as may be said of many of his later letters. It is a long discourse upon the theory that, owing to envy, fame comes to no man till after his death—a contention pre-eminently falsified by his own career. Yet Petrarch doubtless freely retouched the letter and illustrated it with fresh examples in 1359. Its chief interest for his biographers lies in his declared intention to seek the patronage of Robert, King of Naples,[4] as the only "Augustus" of his time, and also in the rather self-satisfied way in which he reminds Tommaso that he is debarred by war, and so by his patriotism, from doing the same. Almost the only topical allusion is to the "purpurati" [5]—the "herd of law-pleaders" known to them both—whom he compares to "chattering jays screeching before the eyes of the crowd" for the sake of a fame which will be buried with them in their tombs. There is nothing improbable [6] in this letter having been written only eight days before he left Bologna. It is practically certain that the brothers' course of study was cut short by the news of their father's death,[7] which was perhaps quite sudden. Easter Day in 1326 fell as early as

[1] *F.* IV. 10 (to T. C.'s brother), "Una ætas erat."

[2] Lo Parco, in the *Giornale Storico* (as above), tries to prove that it must belong to 1325 because it speaks of war between Sicily and Naples; and he produces an array of citations to show that there was a precarious truce in 1326. But was it for the whole year? Muratori (*Annali d'Italia*, VIII. 113) says that a fleet was dispatched in May, 1326. This does not look like a truce.

[3] Extracts are given at the end of this chapter.

[4] P.—perhaps in order to tease his friend—calls him "the Sicilian king."

[5] "Purpurati" was a classical term (in Cicero and Livy) for the officers of a court, but P. is evidently thinking of the scarlet robes of the Bologna doctors.

[6] Lo Parco (*Giornale Storico*, p. 57) talks of the "glaring contradiction" of his departure so soon after the date of the letter, if it belongs to 1326. I see none whatever.

[7] P. expressly gives his parents' death as the cause in *Ep. Post.* and *Rer. Mem.* III.

March 23, and the vacation being for Holy Week and Easter Week, would come to an end on March 31. It must have been some very urgent cause which took the brothers away three weeks after they had resumed their studies; and putting the secession aside as an insufficient cause, even if it occurred at this time, I conclude that the reason must have been their father's death or mortal illness. Petracco doubtless depended almost entirely on his professional income, and when that ceased, the University expenses could no longer be met.[1] When Petrarch wrote to his friend, he may not have known of the impending blow. But even if he knew it and mentioned it, all personal details may have been excised from the letter before publication; and it is plain that Petrarch is looking forward, as he could not have done so securely before Petracco's death, to a literary life rather than to the career of an advocate.

Is it possible to make any just estimate of the benefit which Petrarch derived from his legal education? If we are to credit the opinion of his old age, his seven years at Montpellier and Bologna were "wasted rather than spent."[2] But though we may agree that he had a natural distaste for the study, it does not follow that the "old man's view," which in earlier days is less uncompromisingly stated, was fully justified. Fortunate circumstances enabled him to lead the literary life that he loved; but he was also constantly involved in public affairs, and we cannot resist the impression that he rather enjoyed such divagations as a relief from his severer studies. He was too much a dreamer to be really practical; but he had tact and a sound common sense which gave his opinions weight with those who consulted him. The truth is that he could never "bear the collar" and that this reluctance grew upon him. There we have an explanation of the stronger terms which he used in his old age about his youthful slavery. But the legal training helped to correct some natural defects, even though he soon lost, or never acquired, a mastery of all the intricate details of the Civil Law. The moral objection, on which he insists in the following passage, was

[1] The statement of Squarzafico that P. borrowed from Tommaso Caloria the money to enable him and his brother to return to Avignon, has no foundation. It has not even the merit of a probable conjecture, as Tommaso had already left the University.

[2] "Perdidi potius quam expendi," *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.). "Victrix industriæ cupiditas" (*ibid.*).

probably an afterthought, and not the true reason for abandoning his profession :

" (It was) not because I did not care for the dignity of the Law, which is doubtless great and full of that Roman antiquity in which I delight, but because it was degraded by the villany of those who practise it. And so I revolted at what I would not turn to dishonourable, and could scarcely turn to honourable, uses ; for such rectitude, if I had tried it, would have been set down to ignorance." [1]

According to this view it was " covetousness " [2]—not his own but his father's for him—which drove him to study Law ; his father was trying " to make money out of his talents." [3] So in the 28th Canzone he puts into his adversary's mouth the accusation that he had been brought up to the trade of " selling his words, and false words too." [4] But elsewhere he rather insists upon the fact that for him to study Law was " to fight against nature." [5] When the control of his parents was withdrawn, he returned to the study of letters, which, at least in intention, he had never left.

In middle life he was consulted by a young friend on the advisability of studying Civil Law. He begins by saying frankly that his advice was under suspicion—as of one who had been himself initiated in the mysteries and had then deserted and betrayed them :

" I spent seven years in the study and, so far as my age and ability permitted, I mastered the rudiments. If you ask me whether I regret the time so spent, I hesitate to reply ; for on the one hand I see the advantage of a wide experience, and on the other I grieve, and shall ever grieve, that so large a part of this very short life has been so consumed. In those years I could have done something else, either more noble or more suited to my natural powers." [6]

[1] *Ep. Post.*

[2] See note 2, p. 135.

[3] Quoted in Fuzet's *Pétrarque* (Lille, 1883, p. 15) as from *F.* XIV. 1, through a misprint. He refers to *F.* XXIV. 1.

[4] Canzone XXVIII. (Mestica), ll. 80, 81 :

" Questi in sua prima eta fu dato a l'arte
Da vender parolette, anzi menzogne."

[5] *Rer. Mem.* III. *ad fin.* (Bâle ed. p. 515).

[6] *F.* XX. 4, to Marco of Genoa, of whom we know nothing. The most interesting parts of this letter are translated at the end of this chapter.

And to the Professor who accused him of being a deserter from the studies of Bologna he says:

"My answer is ready, although I suppose it will give little pleasure to you, who shed such lustre on that city and its studies. I will pass over my usual reasons, which I have discussed with others, especially with the most celebrated jurist Oldrado of Lodi. This can I say without offence. Nothing is done well that is against Nature; she made me a lover of solitude, not of the forum. Finally assure yourself of this—either that I have never done anything sensible (which perhaps is right) or if anything, I dare affirm that this above all was a wise and happy decision—that I went to Bologna and that I did not stay there." [1]

The Professor had admitted that he showed much promise [2]; indeed, he tells us himself, in the *Epistle to Posterity*, that this was the opinion of many. We may well believe it, for the strength of his memory was prodigious, and he possessed a rhetorical gift such as few, if any, of his day could surpass. But he had also the artistic soul, which revelled in the beauty of form to be found, as he thought, only in the classics, and which revolted at the petty cavils and distinctions of the Law, and not less, at the ignorance and pomposity of its professors.[3] He may well have regretted having to leave the happy and stimulating life of the University and the tumult of fresh ideas in the "art of song," which he had discovered in the new-born poetry of Italy. But he would relinquish the study of Law without a pang, and regard himself henceforward as a freed captive, to whom the whole world lay open.

[1] *F.* IV. 16 (to a Bolognese professor, perhaps Raniero da Forli).

[2] "Quum maxime florere inciperam," *F.* IV. 16, quoting his correspondent's letter.

[3] Guiseppe Finzi, *Petrarca* (Florence, 1900), p. 8.

LETTERS

F. I. 1.

F. P. TO TOMMASO CALORIA OF MESSINA

On the Impossibility of attaining Fame till after Death

" . . . Hardly any man's writings or exploits have been admired in his lifetime. It is death which sets men praising—and for this reason that envy lives and dies with the body. ' Praise,' you say, ' is given to the writings of many, which, if one may boast '—you go no further, but (like all the indignant) leaving the listener's mind in suspense, you pass on with the sentence incomplete. However, I know what you would say and pursue you with a mental conjecture. The writings of many are praised, which, as compared with your own, ought to lack not only admirers, but readers ; and meanwhile no one touches yours. Recognize in my words your own indignation, which would be just, if you had not appropriated to your own case what belongs to the mass of men—of all, I mean, who have been or will be taken with this passion, or morbid craze for writing. Look first of all at those whose writings get the praise. They are authors who have long been turned to dust. If you want yours, too, to be praised, you must die. With death men's favour begins to live, and the end of life is the beginning of glory ; if the latter should begin sooner, it would seem strange and unseasonable. Nay more, while any of your contemporaries survive, you will not have in full measure what you desire ; when the tomb covers all alike, men will judge you without hatred or envy. So let our own time pass what judgment it will upon us ; if just, let us take it sensibly, if unjust, let us appeal to fairer judges—I mean to posterity—since we cannot find fairness elsewhere. Constant intercourse is the most sensitive of things ; it is offended at trifles, and a man's presence is ever hostile to his fame ; for familiarity and social intimacy detract much from men's admiration.

" Look at the tribe of schoolmen, ' sicklied o'er ' with vigils and fasting ; trust me, there are no sterner toilers than they, and no feebler critics. While they read much, and most laboriously, they examine nothing ; and they don't deign to look at a work, so long as they think they know its author. And so there

is one law for all, for they despise all writings alike, of whose authors they have but one glimpse. This, you will say, happens to men of small ability, but the great and strong burst through all obstacles. Adduce me Pythagoras, and I will bring you those who scorn his talents. Were Plato to return to Greece, Homer to be born again, Aristotle to be restored to life, Varro to be brought back to Italy, Livy to rise from the dead, Cicero to flourish once more, they would find not merely grudging eulogists, but biting and envious detractors, as they found in their own time. What has the Latin language produced greater than Virgil? Yet he found one, who called him no poet, but a mere translator, and a plunderer of the inventions of others. Relying, however, confidently on his own genius and on the judgment of Augustus, he could loftily despise the carping of the envious.

" You also, I know, are conscious of great ability; but where will you find for judge an Augustus—one who, as we read, favoured very earnestly and by every means in his power, the genius of his time? Our kings are good judges of the savour of a banquet or of the flight of hawks; they cannot judge of intellectual qualities. But if they were to presume to do so, their swelling pride would prevent them from stooping or opening their eyes and directing them towards the truth. Therefore lest they should seem to notice their own age, they marvel at the ancients; those whom they know they despise, with the result that the praise of the dead is used to scorn the living. Amidst such judges we have to live and die and—what is harder still—to hold our tongues.

" For where, as I said, will you find an Augustus for judge? Italy possesses one—nay, the whole world has but one—Robert, King of the Sicilies. Lucky Naples! to whose lot has fallen by incomparable good fortune the unique glory of our time; aye, lucky and enviable Naples, as the august home of letters! If you once seemed sweet to Virgil, how much sweeter would you seem now as containing him who rates genius and study at their true value? To you let all betake themselves who have a high confidence in their powers; nor should they dally; delay would be a mistake. For his age is far advanced, and the world has long deserved to be deprived of him, as he deserves to pass to a higher and better realm. I fear that I may find reason to repent too late of my own delay. To put off a good deed is shameful; to deliberate too long about a proper course is itself improper. One must seize the opportunity, and do in haste what could not be done sooner. As for me, I am resolved to ' run and hurry ' (as Cicero says of Cæsar in one of his letters [1]) that I may dedicate

[1] *Ad. Att.* VII. 20. This is a favourite quotation of P. even in his early letters. Unless he obtained it from some citation in Latin writers,

all my studies to the king. My ardour may perhaps effect what often happens to travellers in haste who, if they chance to rise later than they intended, may, by making speed, reach their destination sooner than if they had been awake all night. So, if I have slept too long in the duty of paying court to Robert, I will make up for my slackness by speed. But you must make use of your own arena, since you are hindered from resorting to that king not so much by the barrier of your gulf as by that of war. For your country, which boasts no citizen more patriotic than yourself, is subject to the rule of a hostile king; I should say of a tyrant, if I did not fear to offend your ears. Besides, the question is a great one, and not to be decided by our pens, but by their swords.[1] . . .

"Endure then without wailing what you see has happened to men of the highest genius. But in one part of your letter you seem to make a different complaint—that many, to your knowledge, have obtained a great name in their lifetime. This, too, if you will hear me out, you will be highminded enough to despise. To whom, pray, has such a lot fallen? To those only who defend their fame by clamour, since they cannot with their pens. Look at those men of the 'purple robe'[2] attracting popular attention to themselves by a mighty din, who long to be termed 'Wise,' and whom the vulgar hail as such, allotting herds of wise men to every state, though even Greece, the mother of letters, in the prime of her glory, does not boast of more than seven 'Wise Men'—a name, which has itself seemed to posterity one of unseemly arrogance, albeit their excusers say that they had not obtained the title by their own judgment but by the suffrage of the people. . . . The same vulgar passion rules in our own day among the herd of law-pleaders. Look at those who spend a whole lifetime in the quarrels and cavils of logic and are ever exerting themselves over empty and petty questions, and then take my prophecy about them all. The fame of the whole tribe will undoubtedly perish along with themselves, and one sepulchre will be enough for their names and their bones; for, when death shall have chilled their tongues to rest, they will be forced not only to cease their talk, but to make all talk about them cease. I could overflow with illustrations, and in many cases call you as witness. How many chattering jays have we known, screeching loudly before the eyes of the senseless crowd, whose voice has suddenly come to nought? . . .

it seems to point to the conclusion that he had seen some of the letters to Atticus, before his discovery of 1345.

[1] There were few years of Robert's reign in which he did not make fruitless expeditions against the Aragonese kings of Sicily. (For the whole question see Chap. I.) The passage omitted here is plainly an interpolation of 1359 concerning the detractors of Augustine and Ambrose.

[2] See above, note 5, p. 134.

" Your condition is far different. The time for your fame to sound the loudest will be when you can speak no more. It is a sign of impatience to be tortured by so short a waiting. Wait but a little, and you will gain your wish ; when you have ceased to stand in your own way, a long absence, perhaps, in fact—death alone in full—will gratify it.[1] . . . You will find no ground for indignation in what I have said. No one takes it ill to be surpassed by one, or by a few, unless it be he who has firmly set before him the chief place in the scroll of glory. Suffer—as you would in other matters—the lot of your talents, and the fortune of your name. Did you suppose that Fortune [2] holds sway in death alone ? She is the mistress of all things human, virtue excepted ; that, too, she is allowed to attack, but never to overcome. Of Fame at least, which is slighter than anything, she easily turns the wheel, and pulls it this way and that with her airy decisions, making it pass from the worthy to the unworthy. Nothing indeed is more changeable or more unjust than the judgment of the vulgar, on which Fame is founded. So no wonder if it is constantly shaken, since it leans on such tottering foundations. The realm of Fortune, however, extends only to the living ; death takes a man from her sway. Thenceforth these tricks of hers cease ; whether she will or no, merit is followed by fame, as a solid body by its shadow. You have then, if I mistake not, more cause for glory than for anger, if your lot is shared with almost all other illustrious men. . . .

" You may wait the more calmly, mindful of the old saying in Horace [3] that time makes poems better, as it does wine. . . . Finally, take counsel with yourself. What is this for which we torment ourselves so severely ? The fame which we pursue is wind, is smoke, is a shadow, is nothing at all. And so a keen and upright judgment will the more readily despise it. But if perchance (since this is a familiar plague, which will often attack generous minds) you cannot tear up this longing by the roots, at least clip it in its growth by the pruning-hook of reason. Time and circumstance we must all obey. In fine—to express the sum of my judgments in brief—while you live, cultivate virtue ; in the tomb you will find fame.

" *Bologna, April* 18 (1326)."

[1] In the sentences omitted P. says that only Africanus the elder and Solomon (a queer combination) attained to great fame during their life. In a passage of certainly later date he adds the name of Archias, the poet, but presumes that Cicero's eulogy is due to gratitude to his old tutor.

[2] This is but one of many passages in which P. speaks of " Fortune " as if she were a goddess. He makes a lame defence of the practice to Pierre Bercheur in *F.* XXII. 13 (see Book VI. Chap. XXXII.).

[3] *Epist.* II. i. 34.

F. IX. 8.

F. P. TO GIOVANNI DA RIMINI, ADVOCATE

A Renewal of Old Relations

"*Parma, June* 17 (probably 1348).

"Though from my youth till now fortune has grudged me the sight of your face, yet you have been constantly present to my mind and (to use the name of our once common study) I have possessed you 'civil-wise'; neither distance of space, nor lapse of time, nor (I fancy) death itself will deprive me of you. So I address you with our old familiarity, and return to my pen, as to what they call 'an ancient privilege.' For as you know, we have had no intercourse for twenty years or more—a time long enough for silence, if not for a life, and I cannot say whether you or I or both of us are in fault, or whether I should lay the whole blame on fortune. She has long led us by such opposite or transverse paths that we have found no sight, or even sign, of each other. You congratulate me on my 'state' in brotherly fashion, as of old; but if the word comes from 'standing,' my friend, I have no 'state,' but rather fall and ruin, which is the equal lot and unconquerable necessity of me and of all men. As Horace says:

'One day another day expels,' [1]

and we are whirled along by time without feeling it. Certainly if any good befall me which deserves congratulation, I know you are heartily glad. But you have described yourself in such brief and felicitous terms that I have much congratulation for you. 'Well and cheerful and poor, but rich in mind.' For since the rich mind is praised, as in the poet's,[2]

'In mind he matched the wealth of kings,'

and since the Living Truth proclaims the poor in spirit blessed, no doubt you are happy and in good case, if with this you are content."

[1] *Od.* II. xviii. 15.
[2] Virg. *Georg.* IV. 132.

F. XX. 4.

F. P. TO MARCO OF GENOA [1]

Advice as to the Study of Civil Law

"*Milan, May* 27 (about 1358).

"I have several little notes from you, all to the same purport. You beg me to encourage you in the civil study that you have lately undertaken, and you consider that my words will avail to strengthen your purpose, wavering, as it does, through the novelty and greatness of the enterprise. Your hope has its rise partly in affection for me, partly in your own humility—a noble characteristic and the first step to glory. I have put off my reply not from want of heed, but intentionally, and if you would permit me, I should dissemble to the last.

"Frankly, the subject is difficult for me—more difficult than you think; to speak my mind is dangerous, and silence exposes me to suspicion. My position is such that every word of mine is taken for accusation, my silence for contempt, my jests for mockery, my actual facts for aversion. They call me their 'deserter,' and treat me as if, having been initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, I had forsworn myself and published them to the world.[2] . . .

"There was a time when legislators and orators were in great renown. No doubt it is a class which has always been very rare —rarer even than that of excellent poets, whose scarcity is notorious. What vast ability is needed to unite with the sweetness of copious and ornate speech a knowledge of the Civil Law—infinite in extent, even in old days before it was reducedto a code (a work begun by Julius Cæsar but interrupted by his death and completed by Justinian many centuries after)—but now

[1] We know nothing of this Marco except that he had a warm affection for P., unless, as is probable, he was the same Marco to whom P. addressed the affectionate letter *F.* III. 12. That letter, written from Vaucluse, is at least ten—perhaps twenty—years earlier in date, when his correspondent was young, and its object was to dissuade him from taking the monastic vow instead of devoting himself to the service of his country, as he was then doing (see note 2, p. 146). In the present letter (see below) P. seems to think Marco's age was too advanced for making a beginning in so serious a study. P.'s advice is good, and the trouble he takes characteristic.

[2] I omit here a long passage, of which the first sentences have been already quoted (p. 136). The rest is a dissertation on the necessity of all branches of activity (high or low) and on the importance of Law in restraining the passions of men. Mention is then made of Solon who, according to P. (evidently regarding his case as parallel to his own) turned to poetry in his old age, after publishing his laws. P. says that there are no materials for estimating Solon's motives.

immense, difficult, tangled beyond measure and perplexed by variety of cases differing only in the smallest degree—and besides this, a knowledge of almost everything on which the orator may have to speak. The intellect and memories of such men seem to me supreme, a signal miracle; for it is not enough to have gained a knowledge of things, unless you have everything 'in readiness' (to use Augustus' phrase) for impromptu use in the distinctions of cases and against the sudden and unexpected attacks of your opponent. Nay, even that is not enough, unless the gains of ability and study and the efforts of industry and memory are put forward 'appositely for persuasion' (as the phrase is in Rhetoric)—that is, with a powerful and ornate eloquence suited to the case and able to move men's minds. No wonder there has always been a great scarcity in the followers of so great a profession. For they 'profess' not one, but countless things—above all superb eloquence—and that in a special and peculiar way.[1] . . .

"After a time, since supreme eminence lasts but for a while and descent is ever easy, we come down to those who, leaving the heights of eloquence and having acquired a bare knowledge of Law, showed great excellence in that department; and here it is notorious that Greece yielded the palm to Rome.[2] . . .

"I have specified the more illustrious names, because most of the legists of our own time pay little or no attention to the origin of Law or its founders, content to look after the interests of contracts and decisions and wills and to make pecuniary profit of their study; and yet to know the first beginnings of the arts and their authors is surely a source of delight and of information to the intellect. If you have applied your mind to the foregoing, you may now begin to see a second descent, much greater than the first. You may see here without surprise what is inherent in the nature of things—that when once there is a fall, the momentum increases and there is a rush to ruin by accumulated

[1] He then gives a list of the most famous orators—including, however, only Demosthenes, Isocrates and Æschines among the Greeks, and Cicero, Crassus and Antonius among the Romans—and remarks that Cæsar would have been supreme in the art, had he not been immersed in war and in the conduct of affairs.

[2] Here he enumerates a list of twelve renowned jurists, all of whom (except the three last—Papinian, Paulus and Ulpian) he places under Hadrian and the Autonines. In the main his chronology is correct; but he places Scævola, who was a Republican jurist, under Marcus Aurelius. He had obtained these names from the Digest, which gives an account of their works; there are, however, two mistakes in the names (Fracassetti wrongly says three), which looks as if he were not writing with the Digest before him. His knowledge of the three last comes from the *Augustan History* of Spartian, his copy of which is extant. P.'s knowledge of the history of Roman Law is the more remarkable as he seems to imply that it was not gained from Bologna teaching.

weight, so that the fall from the middle to the lowest is faster and more serious than that from the highest to the middle. Certainly, as the first stage was from the citadel of varied learning and heavenly eloquence to the simple school of equity and 'civil science,' so the second stage leads to talkative ignorance and affords a sure guarantee of a further fall. What is there that is still lower? The laws, described with such weight and ability by our fathers, are misapprehended and distorted; justice, to which they gave so much attention, is dishonoured and put up for sale. Their tongues, their hands, their genius, their soul, their glory, their fame, their time, their friendships—all are for sale, and for no greater price than they are worth. And what a contrast in character between those of the old time and the new! The former buttressed justice with sacred laws, the latter disarm and prostitute it; the first hold truth precious, the second fraud; the one used to give people precise and impregnable judgments, the other encourage lawsuits by tricks and false pretences, and the very things they are called in to destroy by judicial weapons, they strive to perpetuate. . . .

"On this road, undertaken by you late in life—as if you were aware of its difficulty and of the lapse of time—you require the stimulus of my encouragement. I scarcely know in what words to give it, but I will do my best. It is not that the laws are bad, though, while devised for the public good, they are perverted to mischief. Just as gold is not an evil, though it causes sin and peril to many; nor is iron an evil, because, though once discovered for excellent uses (as for agriculture and for national defence), it has occasioned the destruction of individuals and civil war; otherwise, if everything that men put to a bad use is bad, what is there anywhere that is not so? Not the bodily senses, or gifts of mind, or wealth, or the very food with which we are nourished. Even God's compassion and long-suffering are abused by many; and the things which by nature are best turn out in experience to be worst. No, the laws are good, and not merely useful but necessary to the world. But they who in practice apply the laws may be both good and bad; and the more bad there are, the greater the glory of the good. Of course in human actions the motive of the agent takes the first place; the object you have in view makes all the difference. It is your own mind, and not the field of its exercise, that deserves praise or abuse. This it is which turns good to bad and seeming evil into good.[1] . . . One man is attracted to the law-school by covetousness, another by the love of justice. God will be there

[1] He illustrates this by the condemnation of Saul for sparing Agag in defiance of God's command, and by the praise of Phinehas for punishing with death the transgressors of His command.

to distribute His gifts, to weigh the motives of these men and to distinguish between their intentions, so that the first will turn out a mercenary and rattling man of the courts, the second a noble professor of what is right and fair and a patron of justice. You will perceive in all this the tendency of my advice. If you were consulting me before action and leaving me full liberty of counsel, I should bid you be circumspect and weigh your gifts and studies in an equal balance. There are degrees in intellects, as in other things; different talents need different paths. I should urge the consideration of age; for when fruit is required in its season, there must be a timely and early beginning. No tree bears in autumn which has not blossomed in spring. Therefore, though some favour a holiday for tender years, yet according to the most learned in the law, the mind which is destined to be greatly proficient in it must be fashioned not only from infancy, but even before it is weaned from the nurse.[1] . . .

"Now, however, since you ask, not for counsel as to undertaking an enterprise, but for help so that you may persevere in it, I urge and warn you to apply yourself stedfastly to this study, to which your choice or your destiny impels you, and not to start a fresh plan every day. As nothing can be more senseless than for a traveller not to know his destination, so it is the height of disgrace for a man not to know his own wishes. Vainly will you set sail, if you have lost your rudder; your goal will be dictated by chance and not by reason. . . . These many years I have seen you tossed in the billows of deliberation and driven by the blasts of shifting opinion. Begin, I entreat you, in good faith, to be swayed by a single purpose.[2] . . . Nothing is so adverse to calm or so productive of dizziness as to move in a circle.

"My judgment on the whole matter I should sum up as follows. Just as eminence in the first class is a supreme, and eminence in the second a great achievement, so eminence in the third is no small affair and worthy of commendation, so long as the student sets his purpose and the aim of his studies upon this—to be no fosterer of villainy, or propagator of lies or piler of money, like other men, but a defender of justice, a bulwark of the commonwealth, a terror to the insolence of advocates and a bridle for the avarice of judges—in short, a haven for the miserable and a rocky reef to the guilty."

[1] He then urges other difficulties (plainly applicable to his correspondent's case) as the question of marriage, which needs "relief rather than the imposition of a heavier burden"; that of expense and the power of enduring tedium; and that of fame, which in the present state of Law may be great, but cannot be lasting.

[2] This last paragraph makes it practically certain that *F.* III. 12 is addressed to the same person; for in that letter, as the elder man, P. exhorts him to show more decision of character.

CHAPTER V

LOSS OF PARENTS—EARLY YEARS AT AVIGNON (1326–1329)

OF the three years of our poet's life comprised in this chapter we have little direct information. Only one extant letter can be referred to it, and that with some doubt; but we have reminiscences in plenty, which in some measure close the gap. It must have been a critical time, if we judge only from the fact that at the immature age of twenty-two he was now entirely his own master. "Lord of himself—that heritage of woe"—so Byron characterizes the condition, which in his own case, if it led to early fame, was the cause of much disorder and misery.

It has lately been the fashion among Italian critics to assume that Francesco's mother predeceased his father—some say by as much as seven or more years.[1] I have attempted elsewhere [2] to show that so long an interval is simply impossible, though I admit that she may have died early in the previous year. Petrarch wrote an elegy of thirty-eight Latin hexameters on his mother's death, and upon the terms of this youthful production the question largely depends. It is unworthy of his mature powers, and altogether lacks the exquisite tenderness of the lines of Cowper on his mother's picture. Its poor quality may be partly due to the language which he employs, and to the Procrustean determining of its length by the number of his mother's years. Had he chosen a sonnet, his phrasing would have been more natural, because more compressed; and the melody of his native Tuscan would have exhaled an affection which we may be sure he keenly felt. The praise in rather stilted terms of her

[1] Professor Del Lungo (in *Nuova Antologia*, October 16, 1904) claims to have "established" that Petrarch's elegy on his mother's death was composed in his fifteenth year. He may have intended in a future article to give the (very necessary) proofs, but I am not aware that he has done so.

[2] See Excursus II.

" supreme piety and pre-eminent chastity " sounds superfluous from the lips of her son ; and the promise of an earthly fame—to be inseparably linked with his own—strikes a jarring note, however wonderful the subsequent fulfilment. There seems no reason to doubt that the lines were written when his loss was fresh ; and we may gather from them that her sons were present at her funeral, and that her death left them forlorn in a dreary world.[1] A recent critic [2] sees evidence in this expression, which ignores Petracco (if alive), of the presence of a stepmother in the home and of a feeling of rancour towards the father on this account. I doubt whether this evidence could have been " seen " but for the preconceived conviction that such a marriage had taken place. If Petracco died—as we are compelled to believe—when his son left the University, they could scarcely have seen this shadowy stepmother installed in Eletta's room. It seems far better to ignore her very problematical existence altogether, and as Petrarch twice [3] speaks of the deaths of both his parents occurring about the same time, to follow the ancient tradition that Eletta died a few months—perhaps only a few weeks—after her husband.

When their mother was taken, the situation of the two lads must have been indeed forlorn. Francesco at least could not have seen much of Avignon since his earliest schooldays, and could have known little or nothing of his father's friends in the city. It is not likely that Petracco had been able to save money [4] in his hard struggle to maintain the home and to educate his boys. But it seems clear that he left a will [5] and that as his

[1] Cf. ll. 37, 38 :

" Dum stetit ante oculos feretrum miserabile nostros
Ac licuit gelidis lacrymas infundere membris " ;

and ll. 16, 17. :

" Sed quia me fratremque, parens dulcissima, fessos
Pythagoræ in bivio et rerum sub turbine linquis."

[2] F. Lo Parco, *P. e la familia dopo il suo primo ritorno a Avignone*, in *Rassegna della Lett. Ital.* XI. (January, February, 1906), pp. 1 *seqq.* I have not seen this work, but I presume that it presents more briefly the thesis of the article quoted in Excursus III.

[3] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. 5) and *Rer. Mem.* III. 3 (Bâle ed. p. 515).

[4] If we may assume that the Selvaggia of the Florentine document (see Excursus II.) was his daughter, her dowry in 1324 of thirty-five gold florins seems small for a man in Petracco's position. The " divitibus inopes " (*F.* X. 3, quoted just below) may be a mere rhetorical flourish.

[5] In *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.), but not in *F.* X. 3, P. uses the words " exequutores testamentarii."

sons were both minors according to the Roman Law,[1] his executors should have not merely wound up the estate, but acted as guardians or trustees for his children during the next three years. In 1349 Francesco, in a letter to his brother, speaks of them as " curatores "—thus plainly implying that they stood to him in this relation—and he roundly accuses them of fraud.

" Whether through bad luck or our own simplicity, we were lonely and careless youths, a safe mark for such an injury. As the trite proverb says: 'Opportunity makes the thief.' In short, it was this which made us poor instead of rich—aye, and by God's good gift, men of leisure rather than of business, unencumbered rather than overburdened. Moreover, we have seen all those who laded themselves with our spoil exposed to the shafts of fortune, and either consumed by a deadly disease or worn out by a miserable old age. Revenge is no slight consolation for wrong, especially when it happens by the hand of God." [2]

It is clear from this passage that Petracco's trust must have been betrayed, and that there must have been actual malversation of his property. It would be strange if no friends were at hand to champion the orphans' cause; but Petracco would seem to have been deceived in the character [3] of those whom he trusted most; and it is possible both that his fortune was smaller and his debts heavier than his sons supposed. In the sentence following that quoted above, Petrarch speaks of " the storms of the courts and of lawsuits, which was enough to make not only the Curia but the whole world odious " to him. There may be a veiled allusion here to an unsuccessful attempt to bring the plunderers to justice, the failure of which still further disgusted him with his profession of the law.[4] At any rate, it is plain that Petracco's home was broken up and that there was a sale of his effects; for his son says [5] that the executors passed over his

[1] By the Civil Law a man was a minor till he had completed his twenty-fifth year. The Code of Justinian had by this time probably superseded the local (Theodosian) Code at Avignon.

[2] *F.* X. 3 (to Gherardo) in Frac. II., p. 76.

[3] So we gather from an earlier sentence in the letter: " Eligis hominem, cujus fide inter hominum fallacias sis tutus; ille te primum fallit."

[4] Henry Cochin (*Le Frère de P.* p. 23, n.) thinks that these words may refer to some professional work in the law-courts. But surely neither of them was qualified for such work, and it would be inconsistent with P.'s claim that he forsook the law as soon as he was free to do so.

[5] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

splendid manuscript of Cicero as of no importance, being occupied in securing that part of his patrimony which they thought "more valuable prey."

With all these misfortunes it is surprising how the two youths managed to obtain a living before their introduction to the Colonna family. Francesco may have earned something by teaching, as he did in later years; but he had a brother to support whose abilities did not admit of his undertaking such work,[1] and the life of fashion and enjoyment which, as we shall shortly see, they led at this period, seems to imply that some kind of work was open to them that was better paid. They had friends among the large number of persons who were employed in the service of the Curia, and if I am not mistaken, these friends obtained for Francesco an occupation for which he was specially suited. He tells us[2] that Pope John XXII.—the reigning Pope—in his contest with the Empire, felt a great need for the prosecution of research among his books; and since his age (he was eighty-two) and the cares of his office made it impossible for him to consult them personally, he employed a number of persons—among them many monks and friars—to make extracts from them or a brief *résumé* of their contents. The same class of people were utilized, in the absence of newspapers, to serve up to the Pope all the rumours that were afloat in Avignon of current events in Italy and Germany. Petrarch adds that many of the "religious" who were vowed to poverty, amassed great wealth by thus serving the needs of the miserly Pope. He does not inform us that he was himself employed in the work, and perhaps the most important part was such as his youth unfitted him to undertake; but there must have been humbler branches in which he could make a modest living. I am convinced that we have here an autobiographical reference, which, from some not very comprehensible motive, he did not wish to make more precise.

With this occupation I should connect a step which must belong to this period, though he gives no date for it in the *Epistle*

[1] In *F.* XVII. 1 (to Gherardo) he says that his brother, on entering the cloister, was "indoctus" and "literarum expers ac pæne nudus." Before that time Gherardo caused him much expense (*F.* XIII. 5); he was "vagus et lubricus" (*F.* XVI. 9), which seems to mean "volatile and undependable."

[2] *Rer. Mem.* II. IV. *ad fin.* (Bâle ed. pp. 481, 482).

to Posterity,[1] and rarely, if ever, mentions it in his other writings. For such work as the above, though in the main secular, it is practically certain that no layman would be employed. Francesco—and perhaps his brother also,[2] though his employment is less likely—would be required at least to become "a clerk"—that is, to take the tonsure. My own impression is that at this early time—before he had received any benefice—he would not take the minor orders as far as that of acolyte, which in the case of some benefices at least was a necessity. Koerting states[3]—presumably from ignorance—that the fact that he was afterwards beneficed proves that he was in priest's orders. But it is notorious that benefices without cure of souls—even archdeaconries—could be, and frequently were, held by persons in minor orders, who had no intention of proceeding to sacred orders. It seems an inconsistency that such dignified offices could be held by those who were in a position to marry, but there is no doubt about the fact; and it is by no means certain that such benefices would have to be vacated on marriage. At any rate, Pope John at this very time conceded to Charles IV. of France that "married clerks" were not to be entitled to clerical exemptions; and one result of this measure might be that holders of sinecures might be unwilling to marry. Petrarch says that his parents, and even his friends after their death, had urged him to marry,[4] but that he steadily refused; and, with his very unfavourable views upon matrimony,[5] it is well that he did so. But in this matter, as in others, he would probably be jealous of his liberty at this early stage of his career, and the taking of the tonsure would not compromise him in any way. To the last he was well aware that he lacked the true clerical vocation.

[1] He says "a pueritiâ," but in P.'s old age his "boyhood" was a very elastic term.

[2] So de Sade asserts (I. p. 56), but without giving any authority. He unaccountably adds that their parents had educated them for the clerical profession—which is demonstrably untrue; the civil law was practised only by laymen.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 75. The passage he cites from *Ot. Rel.* (given in note 4, p. 152) has nothing to do, as he supposes, with saying mass.

[4] *F.* XXIV. 1 (to the Bishop of Cavaillon in 1361). From the form of the sentence it is not certain that the advice of his parents refers to marriage.

[5] *Ibid.*, *F.* XXII. 1 (*De Rem. Utr. Fort.* I. 45–47; II. 18, 20–22). But there are many other passages.

In a letter of his old age [1] he declares that he had never desired a bishopric, or even the richest benefice with cure of souls, for the care of his own soul was as much as he could manage, and even to this he was unequal. In 1359 he recommends [2] a friend for the office of Apostolic Secretary on the ground that, as a priest, he was a fitter candidate than himself. These facts are a sufficient answer to those [3] who imagine that either now or at any time he entered sacred orders, although his tenure of canonries seems to have imposed upon him certain private obligations,[4] which he was scrupulous to fulfil.

Those obligations, however, belong to a much later period of his life ; and it is entirely beside the point to condemn his action at this time as the adoption of a vocation for which he was naturally unfitted. The " tonsure," or the shaving of a circular patch on the crown of the head, was not an " order," though in early times it was doubtless the mark of candidates for orders. It was still a necessary preliminary to their conferment ; but at this period very many received it without any desire or intention of proceeding further—merely as a matter of convenience in order to comply with the conditions of their employment, or to become entitled, if unmarried, to " benefit of clergy." It did not affect their secular life, or involve the abandonment of their ordinary dress.[5] Guizot considers [6] that the gulf between clergy and laity in the Middle Ages would have been far greater but for the existence of this large intermediate class, who were technically " clergy " but not ecclesiastics.

[1] *Var.* 15 (to F. Bruni)—written from Arqua, and so not earlier than 1369.

[2] *Sen.* I. 4 (to Cardinal Talleyrand), " Vitâ ille clarior et sacerdotio insignis."

[3] Besides Koerting, Mr. Hollway-Calthrop asserts that in later life he became a priest (*op. cit.* p. 27).

[4] See *Ot. Rel.* II. (Bâle ed. p. 363). " Accessit opportuna necessitas divinas laudes utque officium quotidianum celebrandum." This refers not to mass, but to the regular repetition of the daily prayers in the Breviary.

[5] A curious proof of this is afforded by Cap. IV. of Richard of Bury's *Philobiblon*, where " the books " in their address to the scholar, remind him that, if imprisoned on a serious charge, he could point to the little tonsure that " we gave him " (as a proof of his ability to read) and so escape the punishment of the civil courts. Spelman (*Glossarium*, 235) says that coifs (skull caps) were introduced in the secular courts in order to hide the tonsure, because " clerks " were forbidden by Canon Law to practise therein.

[6] Guizot, *History of Civilization in France* (Bell), II. p. 38.

So far, then, as his means permitted, Petrarch was not precluded from full participation in secular life by receiving the tonsure. Within a year of his return from Bologna, as we shall see in the seventh chapter, he became "a professional lover" in the troubadour sense; and, before that event, he was evidently addicted to the society of ladies [1] and anxious to please them by poetic offerings. In a letter to his brother,[2] more than twenty years later, he gives a picture—which has been well called, from the deftness of his touch, a miniature [3]—of the kind of life which they both led in these "salad days" of their youth. We must remember, however, that Petrarch always revels in contrasts and antitheses, and that this letter is addressed to one who had left the world and had been six years a monk. The life of the *beau monde* at Avignon was empty and frivolous, but not more so than it is in great cities to-day, nor perhaps as much so as it was twenty years later under the worldly and luxurious Clement VI. That is the period to which the letter belongs; and Petrarch's reminiscences, interspersed as they are with the moral declamation in which he delights, doubtless take some of their colour from recent as well as remote experience of the circles of fashion. He speaks of the ostentatious banquets with their never-ending courses (such as Froissart loves to describe), of the continual—almost "daily"—dances, and of the hawking expeditions,[4] in which ladies were often no less skilful than men. What strikes him as most foolish was the desire to shine and to be "in the mode," which was the passion of their youth, and which led them into the fopperies and bodily tortures that he so vividly depicts.[5]

"You remember that superfluous splendour of exquisite clothes, which even now, I confess, astonishes me, though less than formerly; that wearisome task of dressing and undressing undergone twice, for we had to change in the evening; that terror lest a hair should escape from its proper position, or lest a gentle breeze should disturb the plaited masses of our locks; that flight from approaching quadrupeds, lest our glossy scented

[1] *F.* X. 3. "Consortium feminæ, sine quo interdum æstimaveram non posse vivere."

[2] *Ibid.* (written probably in 1349).

[3] H. Cochin (*op. cit.*), p. 20.

[4] For the word "aucupando" the Paris MS. has "anhelando," which is to me unintelligible.

[5] Frac. (Latin text), II. 69, 71.

surcoats should be splashed with dirt, or sustain the smallest crease from contact with other things. What was the object of all this anxiety? It was, forsooth, to please the eyes of others; and whose eyes, I pray? Certainly those of many people who displeased our own. . . . How much more manly, more adaptable and more suited to every exigency is the dress of the vulgar than that of kings! But then we thought very differently, and the reward of all our study and toil was to be conspicuous, or, as the poet [1] says:

'To have men point at us, and say—'Tis he!'

And what of our shoes? [2] What a sore and continuous battle they waged against our feet, which they were supposed to protect! Mine, I own, they would have soon rendered useless, unless, warned by necessity, I had preferred for a while to offend the eyes of others rather than reduce my nerves and tendons to a jelly. What shall I say of our curling-tongs and the care of our hair? [3] How often has that labour cut short the sleep, which it had caused to begin late! What torture among pirates could have treated us worse than we were treated by our own hands? The mirror in the morning revealed furrows on our reddened brows, so that we, who were anxious to display our hair, were driven to cover our foreheads with it. Such things were then sweet to the sufferers, but horrible when remembered, and incredible to those who have not been through them. . . . Keep your shoes loose, and they will be supports not shackles for your feet; cut the hair fairly short, and it will not be troublesome to your ears and eyes."

All this painful bondage was evidently undergone that they might make themselves agreeable to the fair sex. It seems that both brothers at this time adopted the pose of young poets in search of "a goddess," to whom they should consecrate their talents. Francesco in the same letter alludes to their youthful efforts with some disdain:

"What trouble we had, what late vigils we kept that our 'passion' might be widely known and that we might become the talk of our neighbours! We twisted syllables, we beat about for

[1] Persius, *Sat.* I. 28.

[2] P. evidently refers here to those shoes, which were then in fashion, with long points (called "poulaines," from their Polish origin). The Church had been scandalized at their length, so in France, in the time of Philip the Fair, they were worn longer than before.

[3] Long hair in curls was evidently then "the mode." In order to prevent the curls from being disarranged at night, they were confined by a linen band tied tightly across the forehead. The mirror was a folding one so as to reflect both the back and front of the head.

words—in short, we did all we could to sing persuasively that love, which should have been modestly covered at least, if we could not suppress it. We received praise for our efforts, and 'the oil of the sinner shone upon our frenzied heads.'" [1]

On a later page he asks his Carthusian brother to think what a difference there was between "the empty little odes, stuffed with false and immodest praise of young women, which shamelessly betrayed our evil intent, and the divine praises of God in your nocturnal choir." Can it be that he includes "Laura," whose virtue and good sense he always extolled to the skies, among the "mulierculæ" (little women) of whom he now speaks with scarcely veiled contempt? Granting that he is writing this letter in the ascetic strain, in which we should not look for exact consistency with his normal self, I cannot but think that he is here referring to earlier "flames," [2] which preceded his life's one great passion. No doubt these attachments were but "skin-deep," and perhaps there was "safety in numbers"; he did not reckon them at all when he asserted in his old age [3] that his love for "Laura" had been "unicus." Nor was there much time for them in the single year that elapsed between his return from Bologna and his first sight of "Laura." But if we were right in supposing that his practice of vernacular poetry began at Bologna, we may be sure that that first year of freedom was largely devoted to it, and that he sought and found subjects for his amorous strains.

None of these early efforts have gained a place in the *Canzoniere*. Many years afterwards he destroyed them as far as he could (for copies had passed into other hands) in order that the collection of his mature work should be dedicated entirely to his poetic mistress. But he obtained some notoriety [4] in

[1] This is a reference to the wrong Vulgate rendering of Ps. cxli. 5 (cxl. in the Vulgate). "Oleum peccatoris non impinguet caput meum." ("Let not their precious balms break my head" (Eng. Prayer-book version).)

[2] It is a point much disputed among Italian critics whether there are traces in the *Canzoniere* of Petrarch's affection for other ladies than "Laura." Cesareo, Mestica and Volpi maintain the affirmative; Mascetta and Sicardi (the last with some exaggeration) the negative. My suggestion above takes no side in the controversy, as I merely hint the possibility that in poems now destroyed P. professed an attachment, by no means serious, to other ladies.

[3] *Ep. Post.*

[4] *Ibid.*

Avignon through these fugitive pieces of his youth; and both the brothers found that this "incense to the fair" exposed them to jealousy, perhaps even to personal danger. Francesco speaks of secret and avowed enemies, some of whom slandered and played tricks upon them, others even challenged them to open combat. From this passage [1] it seems as if Gherardo at least had been involved in a duel. But, in general, both men and women were strangely tolerant, as was natural in the age of chivalry, of an amorous adulation which was, as a rule, only half serious. To us it seems an extraordinary state of society, in which young wives and mothers of irreproachable character received tributes of homage to their beauty from budding poets with little, if any, objection on the part of their husbands and parents. From the *Canzoniere* we may gather that they accepted such tributes with a smiling prudence and gracious severity, which was neither insensible of the prettiness of the verses, nor too sensible of the bold praises offered. The seclusion in which unmarried girls were kept, then and for ages afterwards, forbids us to suppose that they were the subjects of such poems. Yet it was not a healthy moral tone, which refused any approach to maidens, while it freely admitted such liberties with their mothers or married sisters. I must return to this subject in a later chapter (Chapter VII.). Here I need only remark that Petrarch fell in with the customs he saw around him; but in the twenty succeeding years, even before "Laura" died, he had many twinges of conscience, and the letter just quoted, written soon after her death, shows that, at least when the danger was past, he became fully alive to it.

We are not to suppose that at this time Petrarch felt that violent dislike of Avignon which he shows in his later writings. It was only when he had become the fierce opponent of it as the Papal capital and had tasted the sweets of solitude that he waxed eloquent on the defects of its climate and the vices of its inhabitants. There is an amusing passage in his praise of the *Solitary Life*,[2] in which he contrasts the freedom of his existence at Vaucluse with his experiences in the streets of Avignon. In those narrow trackways he was jostled and pushed, "asked to

[1] *F.* X. 3 (Frac. II. 74). "Alii linguâ, alii fraudibus, alii gladio decertant. Brevius loquor omne genus experto."

[2] *Vit. Sol.* I. iv. cap. 9 (Bâle ed. p. 273). The work was probably written in the spring of 1346.

dinner" against his will, "held by the button and compelled to talk," obliged to watch for the salutations of passers-by, or kept on "the tenterhooks of an uncouth and insipid urbanity." There men "gazed in wonder" at him "as a kind of prodigy," "stopped or turned back to look," "whispered loudly" to their companions, or questioned an acquaintance about the passing poet. No doubt the passage refers to the period of his mature renown; but, even in his early youth, his talents were admired and his sonnets handed about in Avignon society. No one can miss the note of self-complacency in his description of the petty annoyances which are the penalties of fame.

However loud the reproaches uttered afterwards by this sturdy Italian patriot against Avignon, it is incontestable that he owed to his residence there both the early establishment and the rapid spread of the glory that he coveted. Though the Papacy had lost much prestige through its subjection to French autocracy, the place of its abode was still the moral, and even the intellectual, centre of the Christian world. Thither flocked from all quarters of Europe princes and prelates, men of affairs and men of letters,[1] who had business to transact at the Pontiff's court. It has been well pointed out that, had Petrarch been involved in the small squabbles of an Italian republic, both his personal history and his mental horizon would have been altogether different.

"At Florence he must have been 'White' or 'Black'; he would have had to choose either between the people and the nobles, or between two tyrants. At Avignon men's minds rose to a level above these local disputes. Of what value were the little interests of Italian cities to men who aspired to the spiritual empire of the world?"[2]

To these early associations the poet owed the spirit of detachment which, except in the case of Rienzi,[3] he steadily maintained towards the intestine quarrels of Italian politics.

His residence at Avignon was no less favourable to the cultivation of his poetic gift in his native tongue. There was indeed

[1] So Petrarch himself says in the *De Sui ipsius et multorum ignorantiâ*, (Bâle ed. p. 1148).

[2] A. Mézières, *Pétrarque*, pp. 17, 18.

[3] In this case it was simply his enthusiasm for the great past of Rome which turned him aside.

at this very time a late renascence of the Troubadour literature, which began at Toulouse, but soon spread to the capital of Provence. It was a revival of the old "Courts of Love," formerly held by noble ladies to preserve the balance in the "Tensons" or disputes between rival poets. According to Cæsar Nostradamus,[1] the presiding genius in the Provençal courts was a noble lady named Stephanette de Gantelme, who held them in her castle of Romanin, near Avignon, and was assisted in her decisions by her niece Laura de Sade, the object of Petrarch's devotion. But the authority of this biographer of the Troubadours is more than suspect; we can never be sure that his lists of poetic ladies rest on any other basis than his own fertile invention. There can be no doubt, however, that, somewhere between 1323 and 1340, Avignon followed the example of Toulouse in reviving the "Courts of Love." It is even said that the Court at Avignon was established under the immediate protection of the Pope.[2] The movement was part of an eager, though not very successful, attempt to restore a dead, or dying, branch of literature; and the new courts presumably only dealt with productions in the *Langue d'Oc*. We have seen similar movements in our own day for the revival of poetry in the old Irish, or in the "landsmaal" of the Norwegian peasantry. Petrarch could doubtless understand and even speak the *Langue d'Oc*, for it was still the tongue of the lower classes in Provence. But although the Avignon Popes were all Frenchmen, the familiar language of their Court, and even of the gay circles in which our poet moved, was Italian.[3] Therefore Italian poetry seems to have become the fashion, as French was the fashion at the court of Frederick the Great; and the young student from Bologna, who was a friend of Cino and other poets of his school, was able to gratify the popular taste by his knowledge of the new forms in use and by his gift of elegant expression. In its origin the new Italian lyric was the child of the Provençal; but now that Provence was ruled by the king of Southern Italy, and its capital was the residence of the Pope, the parent was less honoured in its old home than its precocious offspring.

[1] It was John Nostradamus (son of the famous prophet or astrologer) who first published *Lives of the Troubadours*, but these were embodied —and perhaps embellished—in the later work of his nephew Cæsar.

[2] Sismondi, *Literature of the South of Europe* (Bohn), I. p. 165. If there is any truth in the story, the Pope was probably Clement VI.

[3] Sismondi (*op. cit.*), I. p. 167.

In a letter to Boccaccio [1] of forty years later Petrarch makes the very interesting statement that at one period—which I take to be that of his first years at Avignon—he intended to give his whole time to the study of the vernacular. He gives the following reasons both for forming this resolution and for subsequently abandoning it :

" Of the two styles the Latin, which is the higher, had been so elaborately worked by famous writers of old that scarcely anything of value could be added to it by our efforts, while the vernacular—but recently invented and, though ravaged by many, really cultivated by very few—was showing itself capable of great ornament and enrichment. Animated by this hope and by the ardour of youth, I had begun a great work in Italian, and had already brought together lime and stones and wood for the foundation of the edifice. But when I looked at our own age—the mother of pride and indolence—I began to consider seriously the temper of my intellectual audience and their pretty tricks of pronunciation, which cause your writings to be rather picked to pieces than recited. Having heard this done—not once nor twice but often—I decided after much cogitation, that both I and my work would be mangled at the hands of the public. So, like one who comes upon a snake in the midst of his path, I stopped, and changed, as I hope, to a better and higher purpose. I now said to myself—' Though I cannot prevent my brief and youthful productions from passing through common hands, I will take care they do not destroy those which are more important.' "

The decision here recorded had a great effect upon his after career, but the reasons given are curious and evidently incomplete. We may be sure that the increasing renown of Dante's great poem had something to do with the matter, though, long after this time, Petrarch says that he had purposely avoided possessing a copy of it in order to preserve the independence of his own style.[2] But a more potent reason lay in the fact that Latin was at this time—indeed for fully two centuries after it—the universal language for serious literary composition. By its means—especially by its use in the Universities—scholars all over Europe had been welded into a kind of international community. By writing mainly in Latin Petrarch would be addressing

[1] *Sen.* V. 2 (Frac. 3 in the folios). The date is uncertain, but is probably 1366.

[2] F. XXI. 15.

an audience perhaps smaller in numbers, but infinitely more select and more widely extended. Dante was a new and daring exception, and we know that he hesitated long before finally deciding for Italian. His venture was but just launched, and none could tell what would be the issue. Even two centuries afterwards, such light works as Erasmus' *Colloquies* and *Praise of Folly* had a far wider vogue through being written in the language of learned men. Petrarch gives no hint of the kind of work which he contemplated, but we may be sure that it was a poem. It would be deeply interesting to know whether it was to be an epic, and if so, what was to be its subject. If the "foundations" were laid in this period of youthful frivolity, it could hardly have been prosecuted with success. In his autobiography he says—we may be sure quite truly—"I found many things easy of conception, which I have put aside as too difficult of execution." [1] In his old age it was Petrarch's way to hold the less reputable part of his contemporaries responsible for a course of conduct which was really dictated by personal reasons. So he attributes his enthusiasm for the classics to a strong distaste for his own time [2]; so, too, he lays the blame for his desertion of the Civil Law on the roguery of those who practised it.[3] What makes Petrarch so supremely interesting is that there were two sides to his literary character, which are not often seen in combination. He was a consummate artist in word-music and in the expression of tender feeling and fancy; he was also, for his time, a man of vast erudition, whose retentive memory enabled him to ransack the past, and use its facts and its maxims for historical and moral illustration. He was born for something better than to be a mere love-sick sonneteer. Fortunately for himself—and, we may add, for posterity—he had mental resources which drew him to higher things. He tells us [4] that, on the recovery of his freedom from the trammels of the Law, he resumed his classical studies with the more ardour for their enforced interruption by his University career.

We find evidence for this in his reminiscences of two men, both advanced in years, who were the mentors of his youth and especially encouraged his more serious work. These men were Giovanni of Florence and Raimondo Soranzo. Of the former

[1] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. p. 7).
[2] *Ibid.* (p. 4).
[3] *Ibid.* (p. 5).
[4] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

we know nothing [1] except what Petrarch tells us, but that little is interesting. He was one of the Pope's " scriptores " or writers of briefs,[2] and was so highly trusted in that post that he held it for more than fifty years. He was a venerable grey-haired man of austere character with a considerable knowledge of ancient literature. Petrarch's account of his relations with him shows how salutary was the influence he exercised upon the young student.

" His age and integrity—but above all, the gentleness and sweetness of his conversation—gave him an air of benevolence and authority. His only surname was ' of Florence ' ; and our common love for our country was, I think, the original bond of union between us, for I had nothing else to attract him that I know of. Such a bond is as strong among the good-hearted as the contrary, hatred, is among the bad. This great man, then, had loved and admired and encouraged my small talent. May Christ reward him, for I owe him much, and he did not live long enough for me to give him proof of my gratitude ! Whenever he saw me, he spurred me on to exertion and with fatherly affection excited my young mind to virtue and knowledge, and especially to the love of God, without which, he said, nothing could be done well—nay, without it man was nothing at all, however much puffed up by learning or by power. One day I went by myself, wrapped in thought, to see this gentlest of men and found him alone, engaged in his wonted honourable toil. He received me with a smile of welcome and said : ' Why do I see you so much graver than usual ? Am I wrong, or has something happened ? ' ' You are not wrong, excellent father,' I replied, ' nor has anything new happened. I am pained and tormented by an old complaint. You know my hard work and the cares of my mind, how eagerly I have been striving to raise myself above the common herd, aye, in the words of Virgil and Ennius [3] :

[1] De Sade (*op. cit.* I. 91) says that the Register of John XXII. mentions a Giovanni of Florence, who was a Canon of Pisa and died early in February, 1331. He confidently identifies him with P.'s friend.

[2] Mrs. Jerrold (*Francesco Petrarca*, p. 16) renders this word " copyists." Although P. speaks of the work as involving more labour than ability, it is far more likely that the " scriptores " actually composed the Papal briefs. They received a *précis* of them and turned them into formal ecclesiastical Latin.

[3] Virgil, *Georg.* III. 8, 9.

" Tentanda [P. writes " tentata "] via est, qua me quoque possem
Tollere humo, victorque virum volitare per ora."

The language is borrowed from the epitaph of Ennius on himself which P. knew from Aulus Gellius. Conington thinks the imagery is that of a triumph.

"'A path I ve sought to raise me from the ground
And ride triumphant on the lips of men.'

"'My own zeal and set purpose has not been lacking, nor yet ability, to which, if other testimonies fail me, is not your own enough? How often have you given me high praise for my talents, in the hearing of many, so that you persuaded almost all men of the fact when they heard it from one who cannot lie! How often in our intimate talk, have you gently urged me to cultivate my talents in the higher branches of knowledge, and not to damage by sloth so great a gift of God and of nature! Your good opinion gave me more confidence, and I worked so hard that nothing seemed difficult to me. I persevered, and gave all my hours to study, wasting none. I was not content with the beaten paths, but constantly strove after something new, flattering myself that my labour was not lost, but held great and splendid promise for the future. And now suddenly, without interruption of work, when I thought I was gradually reaching the heights, I feel myself sunk into the depths, and the fount of my intellect all but exhausted. The cause of this strange plague I know not. What I once found easy, seems now beyond my powers; where I used to run without faltering, I now stop, or walk with slow steps and in doubt about everything. From being intelligent I have become stupid, from rich, poor, from venturesome, timid; from being a master, I am now a mere learner. I come to you in despair, for you have brought me to this pass. I confess I know nothing; and as to what I am to do—whether to desist from my efforts and take a new road—I want counsel from no one but you.' As I uttered all this and more, sobbing like a child, he interrupted me, saying, 'Do not, my son, I beg you, waste in complaint time that should be spent in thanksgiving. You are in better case than you think. All the while you seemed to yourself to know much, you knew nothing; on the day you first realized your ignorance, you made an immense advance; now at length, when you see you know nothing, you have begun to learn something. A gulf has opened in front of you which, as long as you thought so magnificently of yourself, you were of course unable to see. One who climbs a mountain begins to behold much which, as long as he was below, he did not see, or thought of no importance; the further a man goes, who enters the sea on foot, the more he learns about its depth, and that he needs a ship in order to proceed. Since I admit you have entered on this path at my advice, I now not merely advise but urge you to continue in it. God will be with you, I assure you.' I listened to these words as to an oracle from heaven, and went away cheerful and inspired with a better hope."[1]

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 6 (to Donnino da Piacenza). It probably belongs to 1373.

The influence of so sensible a friend must have been of inestimable value to Petrarch in his self-directed studies. The letter just quoted was addressed to a young friend in almost the last year of his life; he makes no other mention of Giovanni, but we may find traces of this wise counsellor in letters of much earlier date. One in particular,[1] addressed to his college friend, Tommaso da Messina, must be mentioned in this connexion, though it is too long to be quoted entire. Tommaso had consulted his friend as to how far it was permissible in his own writings to make use of the works of others. Francesco replies that he should have chosen a better adviser. "You have knocked at the door of a pauper; I will try not to send you empty away, but will gladly impart what my mendicancy has gained from another." He then retails Seneca's advice to Lucilius,[2] that writers, like bees, should take the juice of other men's flowers, and by passing them through their own organism convert them into wax and honey.

"I myself, and many greater men, often take the very words of others; but, in my opinion, it shows more delicate skill, as bee-imitators, to express the ideas of other men in our own words. Let us not adopt the style of this man or that, but a style of our own which is compacted of several. No doubt it were nobler not, like bees, to gather from all quarters, but like those worms, which are not much bigger, to spin wisdom and eloquence, as they do silk, from their own entrails, so long as the sense is weighty and true and the style ornate. But since this is given to but few, let us patiently bear the limitations of our powers, neither envying men of loftier genius, nor despising those of humbler, nor being churlish to equals."

He supposes his friend to protest against this advice as inimical to study and conducive to ignorance. In reply he urges that man differs from the brutes—not, as Cicero says, by the mere power of speech, but by that which must precede it, the power of intelligence, knowledge and memory. (The brutes, however, have something similar to this, but not the power itself.) Therefore we must do our utmost to dispel ignorance—the darkness of the mind—and strive to learn something on earth which will show us the way to heaven.

[1] *F.* I. 7; it is dated April 11, and may be of any year between 1328 and 1340, but its place in the collection suggests 1335 or 1336.

[2] Seneca, *Moral Epistles*, XII. 2 (84).

" Meanwhile, we should remember—if the way to the heights seems too far for our sloth (for all men are not born alike)—that we must be content with the bounds which God and nature have set to our powers, or we shall be always enduring mental torture. The further we go towards the knowledge of things—a progress which we must never suspend to our last breath—the more will our ignorance display to us new gulfs in our path. Hence we shall feel grief and anger and contempt for ourselves, though the unlearned vulgar, who never see these gulfs, will pass their time with more cheerfulness and content. That is why knowledge, which ought to be the cause of sacred delight, brings extreme disquiet, even to the destruction of life, in which it promised to be our guide. Therefore we must show moderation which will teach us—not only in the gifts of fortune or of the body, but in those of the mind—to make a habit of giving no small thanks for our small attainments to the Eternal Giver, for He knows what is best for us and has proportioned His gifts to our profit, not to our pleasure. . . ."

If we lack talent, let us have contentment and that moderating common sense, which forms a just estimate of its own powers; we must not neglect Horace's advice (in the *Ars Poetica*) [1] against loading ourselves in our self-complacency with a burden too heavy for us. Of course we need study, but we must not try flights which are beyond us, for then " not only will our efforts be vain, but in trying after the impossible we shall miss the possible." After much learned illustration of this topic, Petrarch returns to the bees, and exhorts his friend to lay in a stock of knowledge for his old age, just as Virgil [2] says bees store up for the winter; and as they

" hover round the white lilies," so must we " pore over the works of the learned and pick out their freshest and sweetest sayings—we must do it with unwearied diligence, yet with gentle modesty. The honourable object of our studies must be not the glory won by contentious subtleties, but the pursuit of truth and virtue. Some knowledge, believe me, is attainable without the wrangling of the schools. It is not clamour, but meditation, which makes the Doctor."

Just as, according to Virgil, bees dislike the smell of garbage, or the reverberating echoes of sound, so must the scholar shun what is base and not truckle to popular applause.

[1] *A. P.* 39, 40. [2] *Georg.* IV. 156, 157.

"With these two things especially do men check the growth of their noble gifts—the desires of the flesh and the perverseness of vulgar opinion. For while the one has its seat within and the other without, the mind loses its spring, and goes far away from the apprehension of truth."

Finally, he warns his friend not to delay too long in employing the fruits of his reading.

"The single glory of the bees is that they turn what they find to another and a better purpose. And so I counsel you to bring whatever you have found in reading and meditation to the test of composition—that is, to store it in the comb."

This letter is one of the best examples of what we may call Petrarch's hortatory style. Some of his disquisitions are apt to weary us because they harp too much upon commonplaces, though the triteness may have been less marked in his day than it is now. Here we may feel sure that he is repeating some of the sage advice of the grey-haired friend of his youth; indeed, though the two letters are nearly forty years apart in date, the earlier seems in places merely an echo of the old counsel reported in the later.

The other friend who helped him in his higher studies was Raimondo Soranzo, one of the professional advocates, whose business it was to plead in suits tried before the Curia. In two letters [1] written long afterwards he gives us particulars of this person, whom he always styles "a venerable old man." He calls him—by contrast with many pretenders—"a true Jurisconsult, who had both the aspect and the disposition of a Sage." He adds that Soranzo took his stand for truth and justice against the Roman Pontiff with lofty and invincible courage, using such freedom and obstinacy that he gloriously forfeited promotion, yet he retained his post with singular dignity and general applause, neither seeking nor obtaining advancement. The reference here is clearly to no ordinary law-suit, but to some act of Papal policy, which this independent lawyer inflexibly opposed. Petrarch gives no details, but in my judgment, the very name "Soranzo" [2]

[1] *F.* XXIV. 1, and *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

[2] M. de Nolhac (*op. cit.* II. 22, n. 2) says that the name is doubtful because in some MSS. of *Sen.* XVI. 1, and of the title of *F.* I. 2, the Latin form appears as "Superanus" or "Superavus"; but the variation and the fact that *F.* XXIV. 1 (like the other MSS.) has only "Superantius,"

affords a certain clue. It was borne by a noble Venetian family, which at this very time supplied a Doge to the Republic. Giovanni Soranzo, who reigned from 1311 to 1327, was elected when the city still lay under the interdict imposed by Clement V. for its attack upon Ferrara.[1] The measure which Raimondo so stoutly opposed must have been the monstrous invitation to all Christian States by the Gascon Pope to repudiate their debts to Venice and to seize her property. Giovanni, who had been a soldier, was a man of prudence and sagacity ; he advised complete submission, and so procured the removal of the interdict. This humiliating policy may not have been to the taste of his relative at Avignon ; but though Raimondo thus lost the favour of the officials of the Curia, he was held in such general respect that he was not deprived of his post.

He was a great collector of books of all kinds, but, except in the case of law-books and of the Histories of Livy, rather for the pleasure of possessing than of reading them. As he was no classical scholar, he needed help in the study of the Roman historian, and this help Petrarch was able and willing to supply. He was rewarded by the almost paternal affection of Soranzo, who encouraged his classical researches both by giving and lending him books. M. de Nolhac has established the fact that a MS. of Livy in the Library at Paris belonged to the poet, who has recorded on the last leaf in his own handwriting, " Bought at Avignon in 1351, yet in my possession long before." The last words suggest the conjecture that the manuscript had belonged to Soranzo and was the copy with which they had pursued their joint studies. It is a richly illuminated volume with thirty pictures in colour on a gilt background and many ornamental capitals. There are numerous rough notes on the fly-leaves and analyses in the margin in a different hand [2] from Petrarch's —as, for instance, an enumeration of the sixteen provinces of

surely makes these readings unimportant. Both the " Sopranzo " of Voigt and the " Soranzio " of some recent writers ignore the proper transmutation of syllables from Latin to Italian.

[1] See above, Chap. III. p. 77. M. de Nolhac thinks Petrarch may have meant that Soranzo belonged to the Italian party, which desired the Pope's return to Rome. The conjecture hardly meets the case, for Petrarch's own attitude in this matter gave no offence.

[2] M. de Nolhac has shown that many of the notes in this hand must have come from one who was practised in the Civil Law, and accustomed to meet others in consultation.

Italy with notices of Italian towns, annotated throughout by Petrarch in a way which shows his knowledge to be more extensive than the writer's. There is also a short and affectionate letter in Latin, which may have been addressed to him by Soranzo on some occasion when he was lending him the volume. M. de Nolhac has also detected the name of Cardinal Colonna, Petrarch's subsequent patron, on one of the earlier leaves, as of an owner of the book, from which he concludes that Soranzo, from his Italian origin, may have been on intimate terms with the Cardinal. It is, of course, possible; but the latter was much the younger man. I should rather conjecture that on Soranzo's death, which may have happened quite early in Petrarch's career—perhaps when he was on his travels—the Cardinal purchased the volume, and that it was not till after his death (in 1348) that Petrarch was able to acquire it. It is enriched with frequent comments in the poet's hand, especially on the period covered by the life of Scipio; and he may have been allowed by the Cardinal to borrow and annotate it at Vaucluse, when his *Africa* was in preparation. At any rate the MS. is of extreme interest, since it touches at so many points the life and works of the poet.

Soranzo's library is of special importance, because it was here that Petrarch, according to the story which he relates in his old age, saw two precious works of antiquity, which have now perished—the two books of Cicero on Glory, and some part at least of Varro on Divine and Human Things. As the lawyer was no scholar and despised all the classics except Livy, he was probably ignorant of the treasures contained in his collection; and Petrarch himself, in those first studies of his youth, had no means of knowing that these manuscripts were unique. His recollections on the subject have been rejected by some as utterly improbable, but surely without sufficient ground.[1] He was imaginative, no doubt, but his memory of books and their contents was extraordinarily keen and strong, and in each case the story of his old age is corroborated by passages of earlier date. His critics have overlooked the fact that his correspondent,[2] Luca della Penna, had heard already—no doubt from the poet's friends—that he had lost some rare books of Cicero and wished to know in what way he had lost them.

[1] See note at the end of this chapter.
[2] In *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

Petrarch replies that it was through the indigence and bad faith of his old schoolmaster, Convenevole.

"He was oppressed at once by two hard taskmasters, poverty and old age, and when my father was dead, he placed all his hopes on me. Though unequal to the burden, yet feeling bound to him by honour and gratitude, I did what I could; so that, when I had no money—which was often—I succoured his need by begging or borrowing from my friends, or even by pledging things with the pawnbrokers. Times without number did he take away books and other things with this object and brought them back, till at length poverty destroyed his sense of honour. Pressed by extreme need, he took away the two volumes of Cicero (my father's and my friend's), pretending that he needed them for some work of his own. . . . When he delayed to return them—since the books had been lent, not to relieve his poverty, but for study—I asked him closely what he had done with them, and, when I found they were in pawn, I begged to know who had them, that I might redeem them. Full of shame and tears, he said it would be too disgraceful to let another do what was his bounden duty; if I would wait a little, he would quickly do it himself. I offered him for the purpose as much money as he wished, but he refused it, begging me not to brand this infamy upon him. Though I put no faith in his promise, I held my peace, from unwillingness to distress one whom I loved. Meanwhile, through the pressure of poverty, he went off to his native Tuscany, when I was in retirement at Vaucluse; and I heard of his departure and of his death in Italy at the same time . . . nor could I ever, with my utmost diligence, find the least trace of the lost Cicero . . . and so I lost books and master together."

There are indications in this narrative that Petrarch's patience and delicacy of feeling towards his old master were put to a long trial. The loan would seem to have been made in the lifetime of Soranzo; and, though we do not know the date of his death, it can hardly be placed later than 1333, and was perhaps earlier. If I am right in concluding that he had only lent—not given—the book to Petrarch, the latter was placed in a peculiarly cruel position, for he could not reclaim his friend's property without exposing his old master, whom he evidently suspected of having sold both books. If his suspicions were well founded, Convenevole would henceforth keep out of his way, which would be easy enough if he still lived at Carpentras. During the ten years or more of this uncertainty Petrarch was often away from Avignon on his travels, and the news of Convenevole's death, about 1340,

accompanied by a request from his fellow-citizens of Prato that the poet would write an epitaph for his tomb, would remind him of the search, which he would have given up as hopeless since Soranzo's death.

We possess a letter [1] from Petrarch to Soranzo, which may perhaps belong to these first years at Avignon. It contains no personal details, and is on the well-worn theme "Memento mori"; but it pleased him so well that he alludes to it with approval in another letter [2] thirty years later. I quote a few passages from it as evidence of his susceptibility to good influence at this period of his life.

"You seem to me—and rightly enough—to be afraid that, like most youths, I may be deceived by the flower of my age. I will not promise you, father, that my character will be solid and stable and free from vanity, for that would be most difficult and, in my opinion, the effect rather of Divine grace than of human virtue; but I do engage to be mindful of my true state. Believe me, I know well enough that even now, at my flowering-time, I am on the way to withering. . . . We are taught by the authority of great men, as well as by experience, that, though a few have the gift of speaking well, it is given to all to live well. . . . For myself, I call my conscience to witness—even if my youth belie my words—that I read, not to become more eloquent or subtle, but to become a better man; though if both results follow, I owe my best thanks for your fatherly advice, which I beg you will often give me. But rest assured that I have begun to consider my ways and count up my perils, and that I know many a doddering old man with his feet more firmly fixed 'in the clay' than are my own. . . . I have in mind, not what I seem to others, but what I am; and I feel that my youth and any personal attractions I may have (for which perhaps some envy me) are meant to arouse my caution and to be put to vigorous use. In short, I know well that, if I mount, I must descend; if I flourish, I must wither; if I am young, I must grow old; if I live, I must die."

Perhaps the "fatherly advice" to which this letter was an answer was called forth by the mere "butterfly existence" which was described earlier in this chapter. Nor need we suppose that there is anything flagrantly inconsistent between his professions here and his practice in the gay circles of Avignon. The

[1] *F.* I. 2. Fracassetti dates it, without giving any reason, in 1331.
[2] *F.* XXIV. 1, written probably about 1361.

ascetic side of Petrarch's nature was never utterly divorced from its æsthetic and artistic side; hence the tender melancholy which overhangs, like a penetrating mist, the beauties of thought and language in the *Canzoniere*. It was the great passion of his life, of which we have yet to speak—and, above all, its utter hopelessness—which drew him away from frivolity to the ambition that was, in a sense, its rival. He was like some knight of chivalry, who undertook a high emprize, as he fancied, solely for his lady's honour and glory, but his own glory was not left out of the reckoning. We may gather this from his arguments to St. Augustine in the *Secret*,[1] though the saint scornfully rejects his pleading. But a mere society reputation is an infinitely fragile thing, which would never have satisfied him. Then, as now, if his talents were to be duly recognized, he needed money, he needed leisure—still more, he needed influence; and where was he to find these things in his poverty and exile?

At this conjuncture—about the year 1328 or 1329[2]—an unexpected and most fortunate event gave him the opportunity that he desired. At Bologna, a few years before, his face and bearing had attracted—all unknown to himself—the favourable notice of another student of noble birth, Giacomo Colonna. At the time nothing came of this attraction. His admirer, unlike himself, completed his course of study (in Canon Law) and repaired to the Papal Court, where the strong influence of his family procured him, apparently when still only tonsured,[3] the post of chaplain to the Pope and several other benefices.[4] Here, in the streets of Avignon, he saw again and remembered the face which had so pleased him at the University; and, after strict

[1] *Secretum*, Dial. III. (Bâle ed. p. 400). "Quid enim adolescens aliud optabam quam ut illi vel soli placerem, quæ mihi vel sola placuerat"; and just below: "Illam . . . quæ me a vulgi consortio segregavit, quæ dux viarum omnium torpenti ingenio calcar admovit."

[2] In *Sen.* XVI. 1 (quoted below) he places his introduction to Colonna in his twenty-second year—two or three years too early. F. Lo Parco says (*op. cit.* below, n. 1, p. 172) that he has "proved" P. began to frequent the Colonna palace in 1325. Yet Giovanni was not made a cardinal till December, 1327, and P. plainly implies (in the same letter) that he had no relations with him till his return from Lombez in 1330.

[3] "Clericali duntaxat charactere insignitus." Bull of Pope John appointing him to the bishopric.

[4] According to de Sade and Fracassetti, he was already Canon of St. John Lateran and Sta. Maria Maggiore, of Cambrai, of Noyon and of Liége, besides being Rector of Leihac in the diocese of Aquileia. If these were all Papal gifts, he was already a favourite.

inquiry into Petrarch's name, character, and condition, he sent for him, and, after some conversation, made him a frank offer of friendship and assistance. The attraction proved entirely mutual, as we may judge from Petrarch's enthusiastic description [1] more than thirty years after his protector's death.

"His manner was gentle and pleasant, yet there was none graver or keener or wiser than he, none more modest in prosperity or more constant in adversity. I speak not on hearsay but from experience, when I say that his eloquence enchained all who heard him, whether clergy or people; he held men's hearts and spirits in his hand and led them whither he would. Both in his letters and in daily intercourse he was so clear and open that when you read or heard him, you were looking into his heart; he needed no interpreter, so exactly did his words correspond with his thoughts. His unparalleled love to his intimates, his unwearied liberality to his friends, his boundless charity to the poor, his affability towards all made him what Horace calls 'the most polished of men.' [2] He had such dignity of bearing and character that his appearance alone would proclaim him a prince among a thousand. After two interviews I was so caught in the toils of his conversation and eloquence that he sat supreme in the citadel of my heart—a throne which he never left, nor will leave while I live."

The subject of this glowing panegyric was the third son [3] in the large family of Stefano Colonna, Count of Palestrina—of whom we have heard more than once in previous chapters—and Gaucerande, daughter of Jourdain IV., Baron of L'Isle Jourdain. The lady appears to have been French, and her sisters were married to noble seigneurs in the South of France. Since the outrage upon their house by Boniface VIII., when they were offered a safe refuge by Philip the Fair, the Colonna had become strongly French in their sympathies; and perhaps this was the reason why the French Pope, John XXII., showered his favours upon them. Besides the benefices granted to Giacomo, the Pope had already made his elder brother, Giovanni, a cardinal, though he was not yet thirty. By a dauntless act of courage at Rome, which we shall describe later,[4] Giacomo had still further pleased the aged Pontiff, who nominated him Bishop of Lombez in

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).
[2] "Ad unguem factus homo." Hor. *Sat.* I. V. 32.
[3] So says de Sade; Fracassetti places him last in the pedigree.
[4] See Chap. X.

Gascony on May 28, 1328.[1] He was a good deal under thirty—perhaps not much older than Petrarch—and was therefore granted a dispensation to be consecrated before the canonical age. Petrarch says [2] that, when he made Giacomo's acquaintance, the latter was already Bishop of Lombez. This may be a slip of memory, or he may have been only Bishop-elect.

This unexpected friendship with one of the powerful family of Colonna was a turning-point in Petrarch's career. In the *Epistle to Posterity* he confesses his surprise at the event, for which he can assign no cause ; but he adds with some *naïveté*, " Then I did not wonder at all, for I thought myself, as is the way with people at that time of life, to be worthy of all honour." We do not know whether the acquaintance relieved him from immediate pecuniary embarrassment ; it was certainly a most favourable circumstance for his fortunes and his fame.

NOTE TO CHAPTER V

On the Loss of Cicero's "De Gloriâ"

I HAVE related this story as Petrarch tells it in his letter to Luca della Penna (*Sen.* XVI. 1, Frac.). I should have added that, by Petrarch's account, the volume—as is common with mediæval manuscripts—contained more than one work, and that, after saying the others were well known, he specifies the *De Oratore* and the *De Legibus*, adding that these were imperfect, as in ordinary copies.

The eminent French scholar, M. Pierre de Nolhac,[3] accepts " the material facts " as correct, but refuses credence to Petrarch's assertion that he had seen the lost work *De Gloriâ*. He takes little notice of the poet's clear recollection of the contents of the MS. Rather he bases his scepticism mainly on *a priori* grounds, for he makes it almost a canon of criticism that Petrarch could not have seen any work of antiquity, which has not survived to our own day.[4] That is, he is

[1] F. Lo Parco (*Il P. e Giacomo Colonna a Tolosa*, in *Memorie della R. Accad. di Archeol*, I. 229–239, Naples, 1911), with his mania for antedating events, says that it was 1327. But the document, which he cites textually, gives the Pope's twelfth year. As he was elected on August 7, May 25 in that year would be 1328. Besides, the event which caused the preferment was in April (not, as he states, August), 1328.

[2] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.), " tunc Lomberiensis Episcopus."

[3] *P. et l'Humanisme*, I. pp. 260–267.

[4] In contradiction to this canon it is now accepted as proved that John of Salisbury (twelfth century) had seen the work of Virius Nicomachus Flavianus (d. 394), *De vestigiis sive dogmate philosophorum*, which is now lost. See Sir J. E. Sandys, *History of Classical Scholarship*, pp. 521, 522. I cannot see why it is less conceivable that an ancient MS. should disappear early in the fourteenth century than in the twelfth.

equally incredulous about Petrarch's statements that he had seen part at least of Varro's work on Divine and Human Things and the Epistles of Augustus to his friends.

I find myself quite unable to accept this critical canon, though it is with diffidence that I dissent from so high an authority. In all three cases Petrarch says merely that he had "seen" them—not that they had been his own property [1]—and that this occurred in his youth. Considering the haphazard way in which his library became dispersed, it would not have surprised me if some unique classic, purchased in his later days, had perished when his effects were sold. But as Petrarch grew older, he became much more acquainted with the extant works of Latin literature; and he would be careful to make a fresh copy of any work which he supposed to be almost unique. In his youth the case was entirely different. Having no work of reference on the subject, he could have had no idea whether a book was rare or not; he would be attracted either by its title—as he says he was with the *De Gloriâ*—or by the fact (as was the case with Cicero's *Pro Archiâ*) that he had seen no other copy.

The Revival of Letters, in which Petrarch was a prime mover, had made little or no progress in his youth; it is scarcely too much to say that the loss of a precious manuscript, which would have been easy in his youth, became far less likely in the last two decades of his career. Among his early letters is one [2] which shows he was well aware that there was a chance of recovering many works, the very existence of which he only knew from other writers. The chief ground of this hope was, in my opinion, the increasing certainty from his own experience that classical works which were rare were in imminent danger of perishing through the ignorance and incompetence of their custodians. That this danger was real and pressing is proved by the experience of Poggio, the great hunter of manuscripts in the next century. His researches brought to light Silius Italicus, Lucretius, Valerius Flaccus, Manilius and Ammianus Marcellinus—works of which Petrarch knew nothing except from allusions encountered in his reading. In our poet's lifetime we know that Boccaccio recovered a portion of the *Annals* and *Histories* of Tacitus [3]; but although, from their intimacy, he must have known that his friend did not possess this writer, there is no extant evidence that he informed him of the discovery. Even the eager manuscript hunters of the next century

[1] M. de Nolhac speaks inaccurately of P.'s "possessing" the *De Gloriâ* (as does G. Voigt in calling it "a present" from Soranzo). Rather P. implies plainly that it belonged to Soranzo ("alterum amici," p. 1049—in the other case he would have added "munus"); and the expression "*quibus visis* me ditissimum æstimavi" cannot be pressed to mean the contrary.

[2] *F.* III. 18 (to Giovanni dell' Ancisa). See Chap. XII. below.

[3] See A. Hortis, *Sulle Opere Latine del Boccaccio*, pp. 424–426), and P. de Nolhac (*op. cit.* II. pp. 43–45). The latter discusses the "strange silence" of P.; and while hinting that the "find" may have been alluded to in some letter not included in his collection, can only suppose P. did not read the *De Claris Mulieribus*, with its plain reference to things in Tacitus, which would have been new to him. I do not agree that Boccaccio must have "supposed" P. already had this author in his rich library. He must have often looked over it and would know that Tacitus was rare.

did not always act immediately upon information received, and thus missed more than one chance, which did not recur. Thus Poggio was informed that there was a perfect Livy in a Cistercian monastery in Hungary, and that a complete copy of Tacitus' *Histories* existed in Germany, but he did not follow up either clue.[1] I am not assuming that these rumours were well founded; but, in the case of Livy, we have positive evidence that William of Malmesbury in the twelfth century had read a copy of Livy which contained the lost CIXth book, and which may therefore have contained the entire work.[2] At the end of the fifteenth century it is said that William Sellinge, Prior of Canterbury, brought back from Italy a complete copy of Cicero's *De Republicâ*,[3] which was soon after destroyed by a fire in the monastery. I am quite unable to understand why it is inconceivable that Petrarch should have seen three works now lost (two of which, and possibly the third, as belonging to a private library were more liable to destruction) when there is evidence that two centuries before him and a century after him treasures as great still existed in English monasteries.

In the fifteenth century (and even later) various stories were current which indicate a belief that Cicero's books *De Gloriâ* were somewhere to be found. First Filelfo, and then Peter Alcyonius, in his book *De Exilio*, were accused of borrowing from them without acknowledgment; and the latter was even said to have burnt a unique copy in order that his plagiarism might not be detected. In the following century Jerome Osorio, Bishop of Sylves in Portugal, published a Latin work, *De Gloriâ*, which was so much beyond his powers that it was suspected to be Cicero's. M. de Nolhac, though he says nothing of Osorio, has no difficulty in showing that the other stories were without foundation. The MS. which Alcyonius was charged with burning is said to have belonged to Lionardo and Bernardo Giustiniani —Venetian humanists, who would have known the value of such a treasure and would not have kept it to themselves. M. de Nolhac justly remarks that a humanist of the fifteenth century would have gained more fame by publishing the recovered work than by pilfering from it for his own compositions; and it has been shown that Osorio's book was far below the level of Cicero.[4] But our critic should surely admit that the existence of these stories—unless started as a result of Petrarch's statement [5]—imply a belief that the work had, or might have, survived to the days of the Revival of Letters. At least M. de

[1] *Poggii Epistolæ*, LVII. Ep. XXX., quoted in Shepherd's *Life of Poggio* (1837), pp. 103, 104. See also Mehus, Pref. *Vit. A. T.*, pp. xlvi., xlvii.

[2] William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella*, ii. 29 (Stevenson's translation in *Church Historians of England*, Vol. III. Pt. I. p. 399). The allusion is to the five cohorts with which Cæsar began the Civil War at Arininum—a fact not mentioned in the Epitome said to be by Florus.

[3] Somner, *Antiq. Cant.* (1640), pp. 294, 295. Another copy existed at Fleury in the tenth century (Putnam, *Books and their Makers in the Middle Ages*, I. p. 61). In Petrarch's time this work was entirely unknown to the learned; but a MS. of the first two books was discovered by Angelo Mai at the Vatican early in the last century.

[4] Hallam, *Literature of Europe*, Vol. II. p. 31.

[5] This is, of course, possible, but not very likely, for P.'s letters were

Nolhac's view of the *a priori* improbability of its survival was not shared by scholars of the fifteenth century; and in my belief it has no foundation.

His other arguments are not free from the vice of special pleading. In his view, the story belongs to a letter of Petrarch's extreme old age,[1] written more than forty years after the event in question and bearing evident marks of senility. Its composition, he says, is "faltering, diffuse and disconnected," and the writer makes evident mistakes of memory. Scarcely any proof is given of these defects, and they will not be equally plain to every reader. Petrarch's style is always "diffuse," and is not more so here than elsewhere; the only slip of memory adduced is his placing his northern journey in his twenty-fifth, instead of his twenty-ninth, year, and the poet, as I have shown, is often inaccurate in dating past events in his career. It has been commonly observed of old people (and Petrarch had barely reached his seventieth year) that their recollection of events in their youth is much more exact and trustworthy than of recent occurrences. In this very letter Petrarch gives a minute account of the way in which he discovered—a generation previously—that the work entitled *Hortensius* or *De Laude Philosophiæ* in one of his MSS. of Cicero was not the work anciently so called, but a book (or books) of the *Academica*. This account, which is particularly lucid and interesting, M. de Nolhac quotes[2] and accepts without demur; apparently he only discerns the signs of extreme old age, when there is a question of a lost work. He mentions with approval the conjecture of Voigt[3] that what Petrarch saw in the lost MS. was a "heading" put by some copyist to some other passages of Cicero on Glory, as certain chapters in the *Tusculan Disputations* (I. III. 2, V. 15). A false title indeed it might have been—as in Petrarch's other experience—for these were not uncommon in mediæval MSS.; but it could hardly have been a collection of Ciceronian excerpts on the subject, which no copyist in the early fourteenth century would make from a classic, and perhaps from no book, unless for religious or educational purposes. Petrarch's correct mention of the "two" books on Glory is brushed aside as borrowed from the *De Officiis*[4]—a striking feat of memory for senile decay.

In the MS. at Troyes of the poet's Cicero, there is a list of Cicero's works on a flyleaf by another hand, which Petrarch has freely annotated in the margin. M. de Nolhac asks why he did not add to the mention of the *De Gloriâ* the simple note, "I had this, but I have lost it." The answer is plain; it was because the loss was only indirectly due to Petrarch himself, and the book lost was not his own, but had merely been lent him by a friend. Our critic wonders that, in the senile letter, dealing with a memory of forty years back, Petrarch says

only printed in 1494, and would not be in many hands. An early biographer, Giannozzo Manetti, says (incorrectly) that P. had found the work in an extreme corner of Germany.

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.). The date of 1374 is at least a year too late.

[2] *Op. cit.* I. p. 244. The passage is in *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.), *immediately before* that on the *De Gloriâ*.

[3] *Wiederbelebung des Classischen Alterthums*, I. p. 40.

[4] *De Off.* II. 9, 31.

nothing of the contents of the *De Gloriâ*. But the anecdote, as he relates it, distinctly implies that he had not studied it before letting Convenevole take it, though he looked forward to that pleasure.

Yet, after all, M. de Nolhac is compelled to confess that this "senile recollection" does not stand alone. In his second letter to Cicero,[1] written in 1345, Petrarch enumerates for the dead orator the most important of his works which then appeared to be lost, ending with the *De Gloriâ*, as to which he adds "though of this last I have rather a doubtful hope than an absolute despair." Our critic admits that this may have been due to a vague remembrance of Soranzo's MS., but he asks whether Petrarch would include it in a list of lost works, if he had seen it with his own eyes. Obviously no one could answer this question without knowing Petrarch's estimate of the risks to such a treasure, if it fell into the hands of those who had no idea of its value. Even in our own day we have known the case of a famous author lending the manuscript of a forthcoming work to a friend, who was so careless about its custody that it was used by a maidservant to light his fires.[2] Petrarch scarcely conceals his suspicion that his old master had sold the books, though he said he had only pledged them; and, since the poet could not trace them among the booksellers and pawnbrokers of Avignon, the presumption would be that Convenevole had sold them to a private person.

M. de Nolhac's last weapon may be called an "argumentum ad hominem," which is hardly worthy of him. After saying that "he will not dwell" on Petrarch's imaginative disposition—so rife in men of the south—nor on the pride of bibliophiles in the "possession" (which the poet never asserts) of a rare treasure, he reminds us that Petrarch had done this thing before—had said that he had seen other Latin classics, which he could not possibly have met with. Does not the last clause contain the familiar fallacy *petitio principii?* He refers to the cases I mentioned above: Varro's *Divine and Human Things* and the Epigrams and Epistles of Augustus. But in these cases Petrarch's statements are not due to the "faltering garrulity of old age"; they were made in the prime of life, when his studies were far advanced. In the "senile letter" he merely says that he had from Soranzo "some things (*aliqua*)" of Varro; in the letter to Varro himself,[3] which belongs to 1350, he claims that he had just "tasted the sweetness of his books on Divine and Human Things." In my humble judgment, M. de Nolhac's attempt to show that only in the later recension of this letter (that of the Venice MS.) Petrarch asserts that he had seen this particular work, fails entirely; the two recensions make precisely the same claim.[4] It is, of course, possible

[1] *F.* XXIV. 4 (Frac. III. 267).

[2] I refer to the destruction of Carlyle's manuscript of the *French Revolution*, which he had lent to J. S. Mill.

[3] *F.* XXIV. 6 (Frac. III. 276).

[4] According to the reading of the (earlier) Paris MS. (which he gives) the "ea ipsa" refer naturally to the "aliqua" which he had seen "long before" (*i.e.* in Soranzo's library). The following words are "et præcipue [*not* "et præterea"] divinarum et humanarum rerum libros"; therefore the "Divine and Human Things" were plainly part of that collection. Fracassetti's reading "eos ipsos" would exclude this interpretation; but for this reading no authority is given.

that what Petrarch saw was merely a series of extracts from Varro's book taken from St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, but it is scarcely likely; mediæval scholars were not sufficiently interested in the classics to make such extracts. Petrarch never claims that he had seen or read the entire work; and it has seemed to good scholars [1] by no means impossible that he had seen some portion of it. With regard to the Epigrams and Epistles of Augustus, M. de Nolhac assumes that Petrarch's statement—also made in the prime of life [2]—that he had seen a MS. in a serious state of decay—was simply a recollection of the allusion to it in Suetonius.[3] It is a bold hypothesis, for he forgets that this statement does not stand alone. With regard to the Epistles, Petrarch, in a letter [4] which may belong to the early Vaucluse period, speaks plainly as if he had read letters by the Emperor to Virgil and Horace, and implies—what was probable enough—that his correspondent (Guido Gonzaga of Mantua) could not have read them. I am aware that, in the life of Horace attributed to Suetonius, there are short extracts from letters by Augustus to the poet; but there is no other indication that Petrarch possessed this work. I do not know of any fragments of letters from Augustus to Virgil in extant writers; there are certainly none in the lives by Donatus and Servius in *Vitæ Vergilianæ* (J. Brummer). The citation seems to be from memory, and although Petrarch was fond of parading the extent of his learning, his statement would be at least equivocal, if he had only read fragments of the letters in two later writers, which he supposed to be genuine.

Therefore, on the question of the *De Gloriâ*, while I grant that Petrarch's story does not admit of verification, I cannot agree with Voigt and de Nolhac that it is antecedently or inherently improbable. The extreme scepticism of these scholars cannot, in my opinion, be maintained without an imputation—which they do not make—upon Petrarch's good faith. Most modern biographers [5] and the editors of Cicero [6] show no suspicion.

[1] Cf. C. T. Cruttvell, *History of Roman Literature*, p. 149.

[2] *Rer. Mem.* I. cap. 2 (Bâle ed. p. 445). Kirner (*op. cit.* Chap. II. *ad fin.*) would date this work in 1344, but this passage may be a later insertion.

[3] In his life of Augustus, Suetonius mentions a book of epigrams, but says nothing of epistles. Petrarch expressly joins the two, and says the MS. was "incomplete" as well as damaged. These details show that it was not a mere vague memory.

[4] *F.* III. 11. M. de Nolhac supposes that the poem of Augustus to which P. refers elsewhere as "still extant" (*Ep. Metr.* II. 3 *ad fin.*) was a spurious poem attributed to Augustus in the interpolated Life of Virgil by Donatus (c. 58). I cannot regard this conjecture as proved, but if P. can be shown to have had this Life, it is not impossible.

[5] As Koerting, Mézières, Hortis and others.

[6] Cicero refers to his treatise *De Gloriâ* in *De Officiis*, II. 31, *Epp. ad Atticum*. XV. 27, XVI. 2, 6, 11, quoted as "fragments" in Baiter-Kayber's ed. of Cicero, Vol. XI. (1869), p. 69 f., where "Petrarcha, *Epp. Sen.* XV. 1," is also quoted without demur. Schanz, *Romische Litteratur geschichte*, Part I. § 171, p. 379 (ed. 1909), refers to Voigt without a protest.

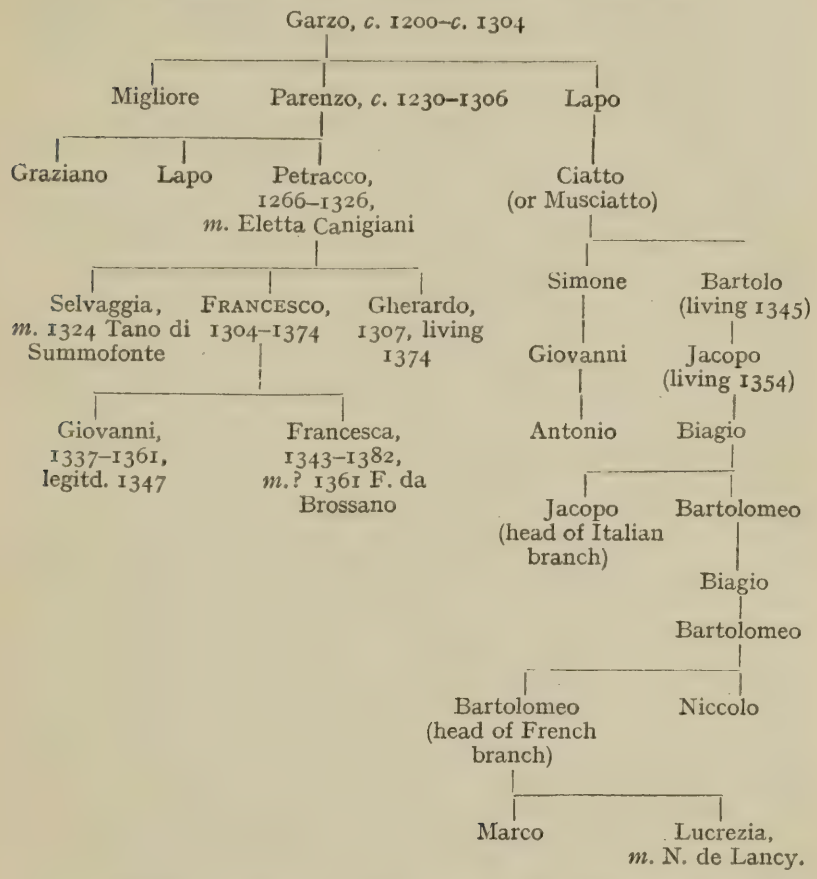
EXCURSUS I

ON PETRARCH'S SURNAMES—FAMILY AND ASSUMED

IT seems strange, in view of the all but universal custom among the upper classes in Italy and other countries in the fourteenth century, to find no family surname applied to the poet either by himself or by his numerous early biographers. This circumstance has produced the impression, which does not seem to be correct, that he was of very humble origin. If it had been so, his statement in the *Letter to Posterity* that his family was ancient would have been the vainest of boasts, since the truth must have been known to many who survived him. The profession of notary followed by his three immediate progenitors was not merely respectable, but even more highly esteemed then than it is now; and the fact that his father inherited landed property at Incisa (though he never enjoyed it) makes it antecedently probable that he used some surname. Accordingly in the two documents still existing and quoted in the next Excursus we find the designation "Dell' Ancisa" applied to Petracco's father Parenzo, not as a mere mention of the place of his extraction but as a family name; and the researches of Italian genealogists have proved that a junior branch, descended from Lapo, a younger brother of Parenzo, always bore that name —at least until the sixteenth century, when one of them migrated to France, where his descendants were afterwards known by the name of De Lancy. The Italian branch continued in the male line till the death of Giambattista dell' Ancisa (b. 1711) on April 5, 1781; his niece Anna Maria (the daughter of his brother) survived till September 4, 1821. Fracassetti gives a complete pedigree [1] of this branch, but only the first generation of the French branch; and we are told in a note that Marco, son of Bartolomeo the first emigrant to France, bore the name of De l'Anchyte. Late in the sixteenth century his youngest sister Lucrezia married N. de Lancy; and it is not clear whether this was her first cousin (the son of her uncle Niccolo), or whether it was through this marriage with a man of similar name that her Italian relatives took the name of De Lancy. The earlier part of the pedigree appears on the opposite page.

[1] For the full pedigree see Frac. (*It.*) I. 214.

PEDIGREE OF THE FAMILY DELL' ANCISA



The letters of Petrarch refer to only two persons (besides his brother Gherardo) who were allied to him by blood. These were Giovanni dell' Ancisa (" Johannes Anchisæus "), to whom he wrote four letters (*F.* III. 18 [1] and *F.* VII. 10, 11 and 12), and Francesco degli Albizzi, to whom the last two of these letters allude. This Giovanni dell' Ancisa is identified by Fracassetti [2] with a certain Benedictine monk of that name belonging to the Silvestrine branch of the Order, who was a Doctor in Theology

[1] The Passioneian MS. of the Letters (now at Rome) and the two chief MSS. at Paris give the recipient of this letter (addressed in the folios " ad fratrem Gerardum ") as " Johannes Anchisæus." The folio address must be a guess from the word " frater," used by P. to this correspondent (as to several other friends). The correspondent lived in Tuscany (" Etruriam perquirant," Frac. I. 180), so he cannot be Gherardo.

[2] The identification was first suggested by Baldelli (*Del P. e delle sue opere*, ed. 1837, p. 256).

and Prior of San Marco at Florence—then (and till 1436 [1]) inhabited by the Benedictines.[2] There is no certain indication in any of the four letters (except perhaps the first) that he is writing to a member of a religious order. He may possibly be addressing the Giovanni, son of Simone (of the junior branch of the pedigree), who was his second cousin once removed; if this individual were a monk, he only became such in later life, for he had a son Antonio. In *F.* VII. 11, Petrarch urges his correspondent to come to Parma and meet the relative of them both, Francesco degli Albizzi, who was expected from France; and had Giovanni then been the prior of his convent, the poet could hardly have supposed he would comply.

I do not know where de Sade obtained the particulars about the young "Franceschino's" journey to Paris (given in t. II. p. 434). The only facts that seem certain about him are that he was Petrarch's relative,[3] that he stayed with him nearly two years [4](probably 1345–1347), that he was a graceful Italian poet,[5] and that he died at Savona on his way to Petrarch at Parma in March or April, 1348.[6] So far as I know the poet never mentions his surname, which depends upon Italian tradition; he may have been related to the family of Dell' Ancisa on the mother's side. The Albizzi were a powerful family, and famous in the next century of Florentine history; but at this time they do not seem to have been reckoned as "Grandi." As Petrarch left Tuscany at the early age of eight, it is surprising to find him in relation with members of his father's family at Florence long after Petracco's death. We do not know whether the latter used his family name at Avignon; but probability is against it, and we may find a reason in his indignation at his unmerited exile.

At any rate it seems certain that his son never did so. The earliest document concerning him is that of the Bologna loan in which he is described as son of d. Petri de Florentia. In the next, the brief appointing him to the Lombez canonry (January 25, 1335), he is styled "Franciscus Petrachi"—the usual way of Latinizing a mere patronymic. If we could trust de Sade as an exact transcriber of the documents quoted in his *Pièces Justificatives*, we should have to conclude that after this date

[1] In that year Pope Eugenius IV. removed the Silvestrines from San Marco to make way for the Dominicans.

[2] The address of *F.* III. 18, in some MSS—"ad fr. [fratrem] Joh. Anch."—may have been taken from the "frater" of the letter. In any case J. A. was not a friar.

[3] "Junctus mihi . . . non minus amore quam sanguine," *F.* VII. 12 (Frac. I. 381).

[4] "Biennio vix integro illius convictu et amicitiâ fretus" (*Ibid.* p. 382).

[5] *Trionfo d'Amore*, Canto III. (Mestica), 37, 38, and S. 246, l. 11.

[6] *F.* VII. 12. Its date is fixed in the plague year by *F.* VII. 10, written five days before.

he was always called—and called himself—" Petrarcha " in Latin, which he wrote in Italian as " Petrarca." But there are several later instances of the original form. In the Marcian MS. (Z) of the letters now at Florence, which Mehus believed to be an autograph, the usual form is " Petracchi " or " Petracch " ; and Domenico Aretino, one of his earliest biographers, says in a note that the spelling ought to be " Petracca." [1] In the document at Pisa, which proves him to have held a canonry there, he is called " Franciscus Petracchi de Florentia " [2] ; in a brief of Clement VI. of March, 1343, relating to his brother, the latter is called " Gerardo Petracho" [3] ; and Zamorra's verses to the poet written in 1345 are addressed " Francisco Petracho." [4] There are even later instances of another variant, as in the letter of Barbato in 1355, first published by Vattasso,[5] in which he is addressed " Francisco Petraccæ Florentino." On the other hand, Boccaccio, who did not know him personally till 1350, always [6] addresses him as " Petrarcha " (in the MS. of one letter, perhaps by error, the Latin is " Petrarca " [7]). Barbato made his acquaintance in 1341, and we probably have in his letter the form which Petrarch used at the time. On his migration to Italy in 1347, which he then intended to be final, he probably made the change—perhaps, as has been suggested,[8] for the sake of greater euphony. Koerting [9] (following Fracassetti),[10] thinks that the Latin epitaph on the tomb at Arquà, which has the spelling " Petrarca," proves that this is the true form. No one disputes, however, that the spelling in the poet's will (written of course in Latin) is " Petrarcha " ; and Fracassetti's suggestion—in the absence of the autograph—that the original may have had " Petrarca " may be turned against himself. For even if the epitaph were composed by Petrarch—which is not certain [11]—it is not likely to have been

[1] See Frac. (*It.*) I. 216, n.

[2] See brief in Paganini (*op. cit.* in Chap. II. p. 52, n. 2).

[3] See brief in Carlo Cipolla (*Mem. d. R. Accad. di Torino*, Ser. II. t. LIX.).

[4] In D. Rossetti's *Poesie Minori di F. P.* II. 400.

[5] M. Vattasso, *Del P. e di alcuni suoi amici* (*Studi e Testi*, Rome, 1904, p. 13). In a new letter of P. to which the above is an answer, he calls himself (very strangely for the date, 1362) "F. Petraccha."

[6] Except in the short biography of P. attributed to him (written in 1342 before acquaintance) where he calls him " F. Petrachi."

[7] F. Corazzini, *Lettere di M. Giovanni Boccaccio*, Florence, 1877, p. 41.

[8] By Giannozzo Manetti in his life of P. in J. P. Tomasini, *Petrarcha Redivivus*, Padua, 1650, p. 195.

[9] *Op. cit.* p. 49.

[10] Frac. (*Proleg*), I. i. n.

[11] The three rhymed lines are utterly unworthy of P. though asserted by Filippo Villani, a younger contemporary, to be his composition. The statement is repeated by Manetti (*op. cit.* p. 206). Villani was perhaps misinformed, though he says that P. begged Lombardo that they might appear instead of a pompous panegyric.

engraved in his lifetime; and the choice by the stonecutter of the Italian form is not surprising. *Pace* the learned Fracassetti, the poet would be aware, while employing "arca" in his Italian signature, that "archa" would be the proper Latin form. The Paduan professor and humanist, Fortunio Liceto (1577–1657), wrote a prolix and pedantic letter to Tomasini [1] on this surname. He argues for "Petrarcha" on *a priori* grounds, without any examination of the poet's own practice. He decides complacently that the name is fitting, because it is derived from "petra" (a rock), denoting firmness and stability, and "arca" (Lat. a chest)—as the depository of the treasure of the soul. Further on, becoming conscious that the "h" is not thus accounted for, he suggests πέτρα and ἀρχή, with the idea of "first of famous men," asserting that πέτρα allegorically signifies "men of renown." As regards "petra" and "arca," the little difficulty that they belong to different languages does not seem to trouble him.

[1] Tomasini, pp. 249–270.

EXCURSUS II

ON PETRARCH'S MOTHER AND SISTER

I HAVE preferred to follow in Chap. I. the ancient tradition which makes Petrarch's mother to have belonged to the family of Canigiani, though some notable critics (as Fracassetti) have abandoned it.

It is true that his earliest biographers make no mention of her family or of Petracco's, confining themselves to broad statements, as that the poet was "of very moderate parentage" (Villani), "of an ancient family and honourable parents" (Vergerio and Polentone)—divergent expressions, which convey the idea that their own knowledge did not extend to details. But the tradition that his mother belonged to the Canigiani can be traced back at least to the end of the fifteenth century. Beccadelli, indeed, says (1540) that "according to some" she was of the Canigiani, but before him Vellutello (1525) had stated the fact without qualification. Pope Urban VIII. (born 1568), whose mother was a Canigiani, was proud to reckon Petrarch among his relatives; but the tradition was of very much older date.[1]

Koerting appears to think [2] that the family was too aristocratic to have given a wife to Petracco, because one of its members, Cino di Canigiani, was Gonfalonier of Justice in 1297. This inference, however, rests upon a misconception. By the "Ordinance of Justice," which was passed in 1292 and remained in force long after the exile of the Bianchi, the nobles ("Grandi") were expressly excluded from offices of State, to which the "Popolani," merchants or professional men, were alone eligible. The office held by Cino proves, therefore, that the Canigiani were not then reckoned as "Grandi," though the noble proportions of their palace in the Via de' Bardi testify to their wealth.

[1] The Marquis de Valori (*Document Historique de Boccace sur Pétrarque*, Paris, 9th ed. 1866, p. 43) states that Francesco Valori, Gonfalonier of Florence in 1496, was, through his wife Costanza Canigiani, great-nephew of *Petrarch* by his marriage with Eletta. For "Petrarch" we must read "Petracco," but the relationship can hardly have been so near after one hundred and seventy years.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 49.

Corazzini has discovered that a Gherardo di Canigiano was on the Signory in 1289; and he plausibly conjectures, from the Christian name which was borne by Petrarch's brother, that this was the father of Eletta. Many "new men" assumed arms on their elevation to office; the armorial bearings of the Canigiani were, argent, a crescent azure.[1] It was of these rich merchants, not strictly "noble," that the party of the Bianchi mainly consisted; and those who had held office about the time of the exclusion of the nobility seem to have been specially marked out for vengeance, when the Neri gained the upper hand. If, then, the father-in-law of Petracco were one of his fellow-exiles, nothing could be more natural than that he should give his daughter to the able notary who had suffered in the same cause.

But in the year 1848 a document was found—or rather refound [2]—among the records of Contracts at Florence, which at first sight seemed to contradict the received tradition. In this document, which is No. 92 in the Protocols of Ser Rustichello, and bears the date May 25, 1331, at Florence,

"Niccolosa, widow (formerly wife) of Ser Petraccho, son of Parenzo dell' Ancisa, a daughter of Vanuis Cino Sigoli, names a certain Simon her special procurator [? proctor] to take possession in her stead of all the goods of the aforesaid deceased Petraccho constituting her inheritance from him, upon which she had a security [3] for her dower, according to the decision of the high court of justice in the commune of Florence."

The authenticity of this document has not been questioned, except by de Sade, who had not seen the original and quotes it from Gamurrini.[4] The problem propounded by it is the most difficult of the many that beset the biographer of Petrarch. There are three possible solutions, which have all found advocates.

1. That the document refers to another Petracco, or, if that be scarcely conceivable, that there has been mistake or fraud. The former is the conjecture of M. Mézières [5]; and while unable to accept this suggestion that there were two brothers named Petracco, I incline, with some hesitation, to the other alternative.

[1] *Florentine Heraldry.* By Howel Wills, pp. 133, 195.

[2] The existence of the document was known to de Sade, for it had been quoted by Gamurrini (note 4, below), but apparently it was not properly examined till the above date.

[3] Called in the original "tenuta," but standing apparently for the "Hypotheca" of Roman Law. See the textual quotation in Frac. *Adnotationes*, p. 3.

[4] *Storia delle famiglie Toscane*, ed. Umbre.

[5] *Pétrarque* (Paris, 1868), p. 13.

2. That the Canigiani tradition must be abandoned, and that Petracco's only wife was Niccolosa Sigoli. This is the view of Fracassetti [1]; but in spite of our great debt to this scholar, I regard it as inadmissible, and as the most infelicitous of several doubtful critical positions to which he has committed himself.

3. That after Eletta's death Petracco took Niccolosa as a second wife. This appears to be the view of Signor Corazzini,[2] who is the latest writer on the subject. I admit, despite the grave reasons against it, that it is a conceivable solution.

It is impossible, without much repetition, to discuss these theories separately; I am therefore compelled to group the chief difficulties under three heads: I. Petracco's property; II. The mother's Christian name; and III. The date of her death.

I. *The property.*—How was it possible that, at least twenty years after the confiscation of Petracco's property, any of that property should remain upon which his wife could found her claim? I think that Fracassetti, in his valuable notes on Petrarch's family, has given far too little weight to this consideration. He argues, indeed, against those [3] who had conjectured that Niccolosa was a second wife, that Petracco must have married her before his exile, for otherwise there would have been no property in Florence, upon which her claim would hold good.[4] But he forgets that, even in that case, she would have had no claim for her dower, unless a special exception was made in her favour. For under the Roman Law, which was observed in Florence and in such a matter was sure to be invoked, the claim of the public treasury upon a man's property, if it had any, took precedence of all other claims, even of that of a wife for her dower; and if any exception had been made in the case of Petracco's wife, there would surely be some evidence of it. But all the facts which we know go to prove the contrary. Petracco was offered, about 1308, the restoration of all his property, if he would submit to a humiliating condition.[5] He refused, and his property was consequently sold by order of the Signory.[6] In 1351, when the Florentines were anxious to have Petrarch as the chief star of their new University, this property was bought back by the authorities in order to be presented to him. Can we believe that it remained unsold till 1331 in consequence of his mother's [7]

[1] *Lettere*, I. 219–222.

[2] *Archivio Storico Italiano*, Ser. V. Vol. IX. 1892, p. 297.

[3] At that time Gamurrini (*op. cit.*) and Pier Antonio dell' Incisa.

[4] This seems to me a strong, if not a conclusive, argument against Signor Corazzini's view.

[5] See above, Chap. II. p. 48.

[6] Cf. *F.* XI. 5, and the letter from the priors (de Sade, Vol. III. App. No. XXIX. pp. 90–92).

[7] And if it were the stepmother, we know that she was actually alive

claim upon it, which she was able to establish after twenty-nine years of exile? If so, how is it that both the poet himself and an early biographer (Lionardo Bruni) speak as if he inherited scarcely anything from *his parents?* If his mother died before the money was received, it would surely have been paid to her sons. And how was it—if Petracco died, as can hardly be doubted, in April, 1326—that it had taken five years to establish her claim?

There is no evidence for Koerting's assertion that Petracco's property was restored to his wife, when she lived in retirement at Incisa. It is far more probable, as Fracassetti supposes, that she was allowed to live there under the care of her husband's relatives —perhaps his father or his brother Graziano—and that after Petracco had thrown in his lot with the invading army of Henry VII. even this favour was withdrawn.

The foregoing argument, which seems conclusive against Fracassetti's theory, is perhaps less cogent against that of Corazzini. The latter says that Petracco may have inherited property —perhaps from his father Parenzo, who survived to 1306— subsequently to his exile, which the Florentine treasury could not touch. But the truth of this contention depends upon the character of the proceedings against him, as to which our information is imperfect. Signor Corazzini says more than he knows when he asserts that Petracco's property was never confiscated, because he was not declared a rebel. We have plain proof that the land was sold; for in his letter of 1351 to the Florentine priors Petrarch speaks of this property—perhaps with some lack of loyalty to his sire—as "having been lost by his father's fault." And though the exact date and circumstances of the sale are not known, the fact is indisputable. Probably it did not take place till 1311 (*i.e.* after Parenzo's death), when by a decree of September 2, the exiles were recalled; but from this decree the "sons" [1] of Ser Parenzo were excepted, though it is provided

when restitution was offered; see below. If she had established her claim, which the document clearly implies, there would have been no case for restitution. This seems to me really to dispose of Signor Corazzini's view, unless Petracco acquired or inherited fresh property in Florence during his exile—a hypothesis considered below.

[1] The "sons" of Ser Parenzo dell' Ancisa are specified as "excepted" (*Eccettati*) from the decree of recall (see above, Chap. II. p. 52, and the names in Del Lungo, *Esilio di Dante*, pp. 107 *seqq*). This need not mean all three, for in a document of April 26, 1306 (published by Gloria in 1878), Petracco and Lapo—evidently together in exile—appoint at Padua Vanni Buonaccorso as their proctor to recover seventy-two florins which their father Parenzo (probably just dead) had left on deposit with the Abbot of Settimo, near Florence. This affords some proof that at that date their property had not been confiscated. Their brother Graziano, if not already dead, may have been absent from Florence during these intestine broils, returning at a later time.

that their position is not to be otherwise affected. As this was the very year of the removal of Eletta from Incisa, we may fairly suppose that Petracco considered her position dangerous owing to the exception—perhaps because through his support of Henry VII. he had been (or expected to be) declared his country's enemy. This is therefore the most likely date for the sale; but there is no evidence to show whether his brothers' property, who may not have been involved in the second confiscation, was included in the sale.

Signor Corazzini asserts that the promise of restitution to Petrarch in 1351 does not mention a farm-estate ("villa" or "podere"), but only "ruris aviti pascua," some pastures belonging to his ancestral property. It is hard to see the importance of the distinction for the thesis which he is maintaining; yet it is scarcely borne out by the terms of Petrarch's letter of thanks (*F.* XI. 5) in which he speaks of "the sweet and very dear seat [sedes], in which my father, grandfather and great-grandfather successively grew old." No doubt this is a rhetorical flourish, as the last words are certainly untrue of his father; but if it can be pressed, it would seem that his father inherited it in due course as the eldest [1] (or eldest surviving) son. Petracco cannot have inherited it till after his banishment (1302), as his father was then alive,[2] but he must have come into it between that date and 1311; and it seems probable on the whole that the property was seized and sold by the State, after he had supported the unsuccessful invasion of Henry VII. The point which Signor Corazzini has to prove is that Petracco could have inherited or acquired property in Florence after 1311, which he could have secured as a dower for a second wife. He asserts it without proof; but in my opinion the truth of the assertion depends on whether the whole property was sold and upon the reasons for the sale, and as to this we have no direct evidence. If the sale took place merely in order to secure the payment of the original fine inflicted by Petracco's adversaries on the trumped-up charge (which was never proved) of falsification of documents, then Signor Corazzini's contention may be correct; but in that case Petrarch's allusion (in *F.* XI. 5) to his father's "fault" must imply that he knew the charge to be true, which is barely conceivable. We must remember, however, that according to Florentine law (Villari, *Florentine History*, pp. 443, 444), fines were recoverable, in the absence or exile of the condemned person, from the family to which he belonged. Petracco may have left personal property in Florence of the amount of 1000 lire which the State could

[1] Fracassetti's pedigree gives Petracco as the third son, but he offers no proof of this.

[2] Possibly also his grandfather Ser Garzo, who lived to be 104; but Petrarch rather implies (*F.* VI. 3) that he did not remember this veteran.

seize ; or if he did not, his family would be forced to raise the sum. The sale of his real (landed) estate must therefore have been the consequence of further proceedings against him, which Signor Corazzini denies, but of which we have no details. On the other hand, the restitution of the property by the State, unless due simply to Petrarch's transcendent merit, looks very like an admission that his father had been unjustly treated. But if Petracco was declared a rebel and his property confiscated through his support of Henry VII., he would obviously have been incapable during his life, unless he were pardoned, of holding or acquiring property in Florence, or its environs. The lapse of forty years might induce the authorities to look leniently upon the sentence as due merely to the strife of political parties ; while Petrarch might as a concession—though still with some failing in loyalty—speak of taking up arms against his country as his father's " fault."

The second marriage, if it took place, must have occurred, as I shall show, very soon after the death of his first wife, and within a year of Petracco's own death. Unless he were pardoned, he would not have returned to Florence ; and therefore it must have taken place at Avignon, and the necessary settlements must have been drawn up there—a fact to which the document ought to make some allusion. And the lady must have been young, if a second document produced by Signor Corazzini refers to her, as is highly probable. For in the will of Sandro—son of Niccolosa's proctor, Simone—dated May 20, 1363, he leaves legacies to each of his three aunts, the daughters of Vannis Sigoli, one of whom is named Monna Niccolosa—this being thirty-seven years after Petracco's death. It is at least curious that this document, while giving her maiden name, does not add her name of marriage. Fracassetti thinks that Petracco was too old to have married again ; but since, according to one version,[1] his age was under sixty, this does not appear to me so strong an objection as that he must have taken another wife within a year, perhaps only a few months, of Eletta's death,[2] and with two young sons to provide for. The language of Petrarch's panegyric on his mother has always been taken to imply that her husband died before her :

> " But that thou, sweetest mother, leavest us,
> Me and my brother, wearied, where the ways
> Of life divide, 'midst of a stormy world." [3]

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[1] In *F.* XXI. 15, he speaks of his father as younger than Dante, and so born at the earliest in 1266 ; but in *Sen.* X. 2, he says he was sixty-four in 1316—*i.e.* born in 1252.

[2] In my view the earliest possible date for this event is January, 1325.

[3] Mr. Hollway-Calthrop's translation of the lines :

> " Sad quia me fratremque, parens dulcissima, fessos
> Pythagoræ im bivio et rerum sub turbine linquis."

Signor Corazzini urges that these lines do not assert that she left her sons *alone* in life's path. This is true; but the ignoring of the father, if alive, would be unlike the filial respect always shown by Petrarch.

II. *The mother's name.*—But the difficulty about the property is less serious, as against Fracassetti, than that of the name of the single wife, if there were but one. If there is one fact more certain than another about the mother of Petrarch, it is that her name was Eletta. In the poem just mentioned he says expressly that she was

" Elect of God in fact no less than name " [1]

—a phrase which surely excludes the idea, suggested by some, that he is only giving her a poetic name, like those of Socrates, Simonides and Olympius, which he gave to three of his friends. His earliest biographer, Boccaccio, says that her name was Lecta or Leta. As a resident in Florence, Boccaccio had exceptional opportunities of knowing both her name and family; and writing as he did about 1342, before he had any personal knowledge of the poet, he would have no means of knowing it, if it were merely a pet name, or a sobriquet devised by the poet himself. His statement is repeated by Sicco Polentone (1463) and Squarzafico (1501), who are not at all likely to have seen his work. In the sixteenth century Vellutello gives the name of Brigida to Petrarch's mother; and this is repeated, with Letta or Lieta as an alternative, by Jean des Tourmes (1550) and Tomasini (1635); but in face of the earlier authorities, who agree with Petrarch's own words, this third name may be at once dismissed.

A really absurd attempt has been made by De Gubernatis [2] to reconcile the document with Petrarch's poem. He suggests first that Niccola was the lady's name, of which Niccolosa or Niccoletta were popular forms, and that from the latter was derived " Letta " or " Eletta "; secondly as to her family, that Vannis or Gianni (*i.e.* Giovanni) di Cino is a shortened or transposed form of " Cinigiani " of which " Canigiani " was a mistaken rendering! He fails to explain " Sigoli," which is undoubtedly the family name occurring in the document; and he gives no evidence that such a family as " Cinigiani " ever existed. It is difficult to take seriously an ingenuity so misplaced. A less violent, but hardly more probable, conjecture is that of Fracassetti, who supposes that " as is not seldom the usage of our own days," the child may have received all three names—Eletta, Brigida and Niccolosa—at the font. However common in these times, such a thing was practically unheard

[1] " Electa Dei tam nomine quam re," l. 5.
[2] See Koerting, pp. 51, 52.

of in the thirteenth century; a more plausible view would be that the notary who drew up the document mistook the name.

We may find an additional argument for the name "Eletta" in the fact that Petrarch's little grand-daughter,[1] with whose parents he was on the most affectionate terms, received that name—no doubt at his suggestion.

III. *Date of the mother's death.*—But the most fatal objection to Fracassetti's theory is that, before the date of the document, Petrarch's mother was certainly dead. It is true that we cannot fix the exact date of her death, except that it must have been either before, or very soon after, his return from Bologna on April 26, 1326. M. Cochin, indeed, whose opinion should stand high with every Petrarch student, thinks that she may have died before the brothers went to Bologna in 1323.[2] But the very passages which he adduces against Fracassetti tell strongly, in my opinion, against this suggestion. He points out that Petrarch states in *F.* XIII. 1, that he lost his mother "primâ adolescentiæ parte." In *Sen.* X. 2, Petrarch speaks of his residence at Bologna as constituting his "entrance upon adolescence"[3]; and no doubt he would have regarded that period as extending at least to his thirtieth year, if not longer.

But there are two passages which definitely connect the cessation of his studies at Bologna with the death of both his parents, and not merely of his father, suggesting inevitably, in my view, that their deaths were not far apart. The first is as follows:

"My parents had driven me to learn the Civil Law, in which, *while they lived*, I made some progress; but when I was left to myself, I returned (to more humane studies)."[4]

Surely this could not have been written, unless by a lapse of memory, if his mother had died before he entered the great University of Law. The other passage, while less conclusive against the second-marriage theory, seems to me fatal to the views of Fracassetti and M. Cochin. Petrarch writes in the *Epistle to Posterity*: "I deserted that study [of Law] altogether, as soon as the care of my parents deserted me," adding shortly after, "Accordingly in my 22nd year I returned to Avignon." The rendering of the end of the first sentence[5] by Fracassetti in his Italian translation, "as soon as I was released from the

[1] *Lettere di Messer G. Boccaccio* (ed. F. Corazzini), No. 23, p. 127.

[2] *Le Frère de Pétrarque* (Paris, 1903), p. 14. Lo Parco, whose theories I discuss in Excursus III., would fix her death in 1320; but these theories are like a house of cards—the whole structure collapses through one weak point.

[3] "Jam adolescentiam ingressus." B. ed. p. 960. He uses a phrase, identical with that in *F.* XIII. 1, of 1327 in the Virgil Note (see below, p. 224).

[4] *Ibid.* p. 515 (*Rer. Mem.* III. cap. 3).

[5] The punctuation of this passage, as of others, in Fracassetti's Latin

authority *of my father*," [1] can only be described as a disingenuous attempt to make the words square with his own theory. Signor Corazzini, whose object is to prove that Petracco lived long enough to contract a second marriage, interprets the last sentence as referring, *in the father's case only*, not to death, but to the neglect of the children of his first consort—speaking of Petracco's being "in the snares of his grey-haired love for his new companion."

Primâ facie this view might be plausible if it were not for the clear explanation of Petrarch's phrase in the parallel passage of *Rer. Mem.*; but it would contradict all we know of Petracco's character as a strict and careful father. It would also leave entirely unexplained the removal of the lads from Bologna in the middle of their course—three weeks after the beginning of the summer term. The only reasonable explanation of this circumstance [2]—consistent, that is, with the passages just quoted—is that they were removed in consequence of their father's death or mortal illness.[3] The mother's death would hardly be a sufficient cause; and it is not conceivable that the lads could have led from 1326 to 1330 the dandified life of "men about town" so graphically described by Petrarch in *F.* X. 3, if their "martinet of a father" had been still living. The only other possible cause—that Petracco could no longer afford the expense—would conflict with Petrarch's positive statement in *Rer. Mem.*

In Chap. IV. I have admitted the possibility that Petrarch's presence in Avignon during the Bologna spring term in February, 1325—if that be established—may have been connected with the death of his mother at that time.[4] It rests merely on the note upon the flyleaf of his *De Civitate Dei*, and one of his friends might have been commissioned by him to buy the book, though the position of the words "in Avinione" rather negatives that idea. M. de Nolhac,[5] whose judgment on the point is

text, is obviously faulty. I prefer that of de Sade: "Ego vero studium illud omne destitui, mox ut me parentum cura destituit." Professor Robinson (*Petrarch*, 1898, p. 66) adopts the latter, but translates rather too freely: "As soon as it was no longer necessary to consult the wishes of my parents," apparently taking "parentum" as an objective genitive, which entirely misses the point of the intentional repetition of the verb.

[1] "Come appena della paterna autorita fui prosciolto." Ital. vers. Vol. I. 205.

[2] The Easter of 1326, when the students would be allowed a fortnight's recess, fell as early as March 23.

[3] See above, Chap. IV. pp. 135, 136. Signor Corazzini makes the statement—an astonishing one if he were aware of these passages—that the fixing of Petracco's death in 1326 is simply an assertion of Petrarch's biographers.

[4] On this point the story of the loan (pp. 129, 130) affords some, though not conclusive, confirmation.

[5] *P. et l'Hum.* (2nd ed. 1907), Vol. II. pp. 196, 197).

incontestable, concludes from the form of the handwriting that it is the earliest specimen of it extant. One of the poet's early biographers—Gir. Squarzafico of Alessandria (1501)—who is followed by de Sade, asserts that Eletta died less than a year before her husband; but he places her death in Petrarch's 22nd year, *i.e.* in 1326. He adds that Petrarch was so overcome with grief that for some months he could not be consoled.

We are therefore left with the practical certainty that Petracco died about April, 1326, and that his wife died either soon after him, or in the previous year.[1] In the latter case he had only fifteen months at most—probably less—in which to contract a second marriage. The former date finds countenance in the whole tone of Petrarch's panegyric on his mother; but there is one point in it which, while conclusive against Fracassetti's view, lends some support to the earlier date.

Petrarch says towards the end of it that he dedicates to her as many verses as her life had contained years; and the piece is 38 lines in length. A simple comparison of dates will show that if this interpretation be correct, her death could not have been later than 1326, and may possibly have been somewhat earlier. For if she had lived till 1331, she must have been married at ten years of age and a mother at eleven; and though a marriage at fifteen sounds improbable to modern ears, it was common enough in those days, and has been the lot of several princesses in our own. If she died in January, 1325, she may have been born in 1286, and therefore married at seventeen. Fracassetti, who zealously supports not only the authenticity but the accuracy of the document, can only reply to this fatal objection that either the poem is incomplete, or the number 38 applies to the years of Petrarch's life, and not to his mother's age at death. To the first suggestion it is enough to answer that there is no trace of a lacuna, and that the poem shows no sign of being unfinished,[2] ending naturally with the four lines quoted below.[3] The second

[1] It is very odd that de Sade should suppose (in a note to Vol. I. p. 54) that the bodies of Petracco and his wife were conveyed to Italy, on the strength of ll. 85, 86 of the Canzone "Italia mia."

"Madre benigna e pia,
Che copre l'uno e l'altro parente."

This literal way of interpreting the *Canzoniere*, in the search for biographical detail, has been a fruitful source of error. As Carducci and others long before him have pointed out, Petrarch is not speaking here *in propriâ personâ*, but is placing words in the mouth of some Italian ruler or prince.

[2] I am surprised that Koerting considers this probable. He assigns no reason, and indeed comes to no decision upon the whole question.

[3] "Versiculos tibi nunc totidem, quot præbuit annos
Vita, damus. Gemitus at cætera digna tulisti,
Dum stetit ante oculos feretrum miserabile nostros
Ac licuit gelidis lacrimas infundere membris."

suggestion, which Fracassetti strangely adopts, is not only in itself most unlikely, but is positively contradicted by the poet's words (quoted above) in *F.* XIII. 1. There would surely be little or no point in Petrarch's addressing as many verses to his mother's memory as the years which he happened to have lived at the time of her death, or at the time of their composition (which may have been later); while the natural interpretation, if it sounds somewhat cold, is perfectly in accord with the fanciful ideas of the time. But can we possibly believe that Petrarch's mother, whose memory he cherished with so much affection,[1] survived till 1342, five years after his retreat to Vaucluse, when there is not the slightest allusion to her in letters of an earlier date? And is it conceivable that his confident anticipation of future fame,[2] in which his mother was to have a share, was penned after his laurel-crowning on the Capitol? The prophecy is certainly a remarkable one, but it would have seemed merely ridiculous to his contemporaries, if it had been made after the event.

What conclusion, then, are we to adopt as to this document in face of such contradictory evidence? M. Mézières supposes that it must refer to another Petracco; and as it is difficult to believe that this Petracco could have been the son of another Parenzo dell' Ancisa, he suggests that it was one of the brothers of our Petracco. Before I saw this conjecture, I had adopted one rather similar, but not quite identical. As it is not likely that two brothers would bear the same name—and that name a peculiar variety of Pietro—one must conclude, either that the scribe copied the name by mistake from some deeds of the Incisa lands anterior to Petracco's condemnation; or that—the title of the three brothers being somewhat intermixed—a minor fraud was perpetrated and the name purposely changed (from Graziano to Petracco) in order to fit in with the language of such deeds. The latter view would perhaps be the more probable, if Graziano had successfully defended his share from confiscation, when Petracco's property was sold, but yet had omitted to have a fresh deed drawn up defining his title. If this were the case, Niccolosa might be the widow of Graziano; and the ruse of her lawyer, though of course morally indefensible, might have escaped detection to this day. I cannot pretend that this solution is entirely satisfactory; but it seems better than that of a second marriage, on account of the small time available, and the serious difficulties involved in Petracco's holding property in Florence.

From another Florentine document, first published in its entirety by Baldelli, we learn that "on the 12th of April, 1324,

[1] Panegyric and *Sen.* X. 2.

[2] "Vivemus pariter; pariter memorabimur ambo," etc., ll. 24–32.

Giovanni, son of the late Tano di Summofonte, received from Petracco, son of Ser Parenzo dell' Ancisa, 35 florins as the dower of Selvaggia his daughter and wife of the said Giovanni."

As Petrarch nowhere mentions this sister, and seems more than once to imply that his brother and himself were the only surviving children of their parents, M. Mézières not unnaturally considers that Selvaggia was the daughter of the Petracco of the first document, and not of the father of our poet. And if there were really two Petraccos, each son of a Parenzo dell' Ancisa, this may be the true explanation ; but the hypothesis makes a large claim upon our belief.

But there is some other evidence—not, however, very definite —that Petrarch had a sister. Lionardo Aretino, who was born five years before the poet's death, states that nearly the whole of Petrarch's inheritance was consumed in marrying his sister. The form of the sentence seems to imply that Petrarch himself spent the money for this purpose, which in view of his complete silence, is most improbable, besides being inconsistent with the date recorded above. The dowry named in the document, even if we suppose the florins were of gold, scarcely seems worthy of the daughter of a notary, as it would only amount to about £80 ; but Petracco may have been in straits for money. As this sister was married in Florence, and Lionardo spent most of his life there, it is hardly likely that he would be deceived about her existence, or have confused her with one of a different family. What is really almost incredible is that if she were the child of the same mother as Francesco, she should have remained behind in Florence and not have accompanied her parents into exile.

On these grounds I am disposed to agree with Fracassetti that Selvaggia was probably a natural daughter of Petracco, or indeed the child of a former marriage ; and that either his own shame, or the affection of her maternal relatives, prevented her accompanying her father to France ; and thus Petrarch's silence would be explained. A solution of both difficulties would be found, if we could suppose that Selvaggia was the daughter of the Niccolosa of the first document, and that the latter had been divorced before the exile of Petracco. But in that case, if she were the guilty party, she would have forfeited her dower, and in any case could not have obtained it at Florence ; and the canon law against divorce was so stringent that Petrarch could not have been admitted to minor orders ; while any slur of this kind upon his birth would have been too good a handle to be lost by his many enemies in his lifetime.

It is hardly necessary to mention a scandalous story, borrowed by Squarzafico from Filelfo, which represents that a beautiful

sister of Petrarch was the paramour of Pope Benedict XII., who, after trying Petrarch in vain, succeeded in corrupting his brother to make her yield to his desires. Every circumstance of this story is improbable, and some manifestly false ; the only sister of whom we have any record was married ten years before Benedict became Pope.

BOOK II

HIS LYRIC POEMS AND EARLY MANHOOD

CHAPTER VI

PETRARCH'S PREDECESSORS IN VERNACULAR POETRY, PROVENÇAL AND ITALIAN

WE have seen that our poet's independent studies at the Universities and at Avignon were divided between the Latin classics and vernacular poetry. But there is reason to believe that his first attempts at original composition were in his native tongue.[1] This, therefore, seems the fittest place, before speaking of his unhappy passion, to inquire into the extent of his debt (as regards both the form and the spirit of his lyric) to his predecessors in the South of France and in Tuscany. Anything like a history of the earlier poetry would be at once beyond my powers and foreign to my purpose. Such knowledge can be gained from other books; the aim of this chapter is the humbler one of attempting to assign him his exact place in the development of Italian lyric.[2]

It has recently been asserted [3] that he claimed an "absolute originality" for his Italian Muse—that he would have us believe he was a kind of "poetical Pallas" sprung from the head of Jupiter, a "Melchizedek," with no literary pedigree behind him.[4] This notion is taken from a late letter to Boccaccio,[5] in which he defends himself against the charge of envying Dante. There have been various opinions as to the adequacy of this

[1] In *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.), speaking of the year 1330 and of his introduction to Giacomo Colonna, he says that the Bishop was pleased with his Italian poems, in which at that youthful time he was prolific (B. ed. p. 1047).

[2] In this chapter I am much indebted to the learned paper by N. Scarano, *Fonti Provenzale e Italiane della lirica Petrarchesca*, in *Studi di Filologia Romanza* (ed. Monaci), Vol. VIII. 1901, pp. 250–360.

[3] By Gaspary in his *Storia della Letteratura Italiana* (translated by Zingarelli), Turin, 1887, Vol. I. Chap. XIV. p. 396.

[4] With these "embellishments" F. J. Snell (Periods of European Literature; *The Fourteenth Century*, 1899, pp. 128, 148) follows Gaspary's theory.

[5] *F.* XXI. 15 (probably of 1359). See Chap. XXIII. below.

defence; but its main point—that he had never "acquired a copy" of the *Commedia* from a fear of borrowing Dante's diction—is easily comprehensible. He nowhere affirms that he had never read the "sacred poem"—still less that he had never studied the lyric of his Provençal and Italian predecessors—but rather that he had purposely avoided becoming too familiar with it. His attempt to acquire an Italian style of his own, uncontaminated by secret pilfering or conscious imitation, he describes as a piece of youthful pride. He does not even say that he had succeeded, but simply leaves the public to judge. His chief concern is to maintain that he had shunned stealing or direct borrowing from others as "hidden rocks," which would have wrecked his poetic barque. "If any expression be found in my Italian writings similar or identical with his [Dante's] language or that of any one else, it is due not to theft or conscious imitation, but to chance or to what Cicero calls 'similarity of natural gifts.'" [1] The claim is a large one and can hardly be accepted without some qualification. But it ought to be interpreted in the light of the letter to Tommaso Caloria quoted in the last chapter,[2] where Petrarch says that modern writers, like bees, may take honey from the flowers of others, but should first pass it through their own organism before storing it in the comb. His meaning, then, is that he had carefully eschewed plagiarism—a misdemeanour less easily detected before the days of printing. Speaking generally, we may say that he has succeeded, as perhaps he could not have done by any other means, in acquiring a distinctive style. He was endowed with an extraordinary verbal memory; the rhythm, even the very words, of a passage that had struck him clung to his mind long after he had forgotten where he saw it. His genius was assimilative, rather than creative; and this letter to Boccaccio proves that he was aware of the danger attaching to his peculiar gift. But if he be taken to mean that he acknowledged no debt to his predecessors, the claim would seem preposterous—the very acme of presumption.

As we have already shown, his education, during the susceptible years of youth at the Universities of Montpellier and Bologna, placed him in close relation with two schools of love-poetry—the one ancient, the other recent—which had been

[1] *F.* XXI. 15 (Frac. III. 111, 112).
[2] *F.* I. 7 (Frac. I. 58). See above, pp. 163–165.

successively predominant in Southern Europe. His exile in Provence gave him an advantage over his immediate Italian forerunners by bringing him into contact with the lyric of chivalry in its first home. The great troubadours, indeed, had long been dead, but their productions survived both in manuscript and on the lips of the people.[1] We may be reasonably sure that Dante's knowledge of them was due more to his own reading than to popular recitation; and we know that Petrarch made use of Arnaud Daniel at a time when he was living in Italy.[2] During his earlier years in Provence and Languedoc he must have had access to large collections of their works, even if he did not himself possess them.[3] His debt to them, both in images and in metrical forms, is so considerable as to imply the most careful study. No indirect influence through the poetry of Sicily and Northern Italy is sufficient to explain it. As his opportunities were greater, so he would naturally owe more to the lyric of Southern France than his Italian predecessors.

Of the forms employed by him only the sonnet and the madrigal were not indigenous in Provence. Even the sonnet, according to good authorities,[4] was developed by the Italians from the "stanza" of the Provençal "Canzo." The word, at any rate, is originally Italian, and was only adopted into the *Langue d'Oc* by later troubadours, not in its technical sense, but as meaning any kind of lyric.[5] The perfected sonnet of fourteen lines, composed of two quatrains and two tercets, is not found in Provençal, except in two poems composed in that tongue

[1] Cf. what is said above in Chap. IV. of the "Jongleurs" (Prov. "Joglars") and their influence in P.'s time. De Nolhac (*P. et l'Hum.* II. 226) would seem unwarrantably to confine the troubadour influence upon P. to these recitations.

[2] See his note in the autograph copy of the *Canzoniere* to S. 226 ("Aspro Cor"), which proves that that sonnet was written at Parma on September 21, 1350, and was suggested by a poem of A. Daniel, which he had read (and perhaps copied) at Padua some months before.

[3] This fact is not disproved by his not entering the collection in his early catalogue, which contains only Latin works (classical and ecclesiastical). For a collection in the Vatican supposed to have belonged to P. see Chap. IV. p. 108.

[4] A. Gaspary, *History of Italian Literature to the Death of Dante*, translated by H. Oelsner (Bohn's Standard Library, 1901), p. 64. Mr. Snell (*op. cit.* p. 104) mentions a rival theory that the sonnet sprang from the fusion of two "strambotti" (or "catches") of nine and six lines respectively. The antiquity of the "strambotto" seems to require proof.

[5] F. Hueffer (*The Troubadours*, 1878, p. 106) quotes an instance from Giraud de Borneilh, who died in 1275, and is therefore a late troubadour.

by Italians, Dante da Maiano (a contemporary of his greater namesake) and Paolo Lanfranchi.[1] The "Canzone" was the prevailing metrical form in the earliest Italian lyric; and this, even if not adopted from Provence, undoubtedly originated there, where it was in constant use. Gaspary, however, says that it was a necessary form of the lyric set to music, for its arrangement in stanzas was adapted to a repetition of the melody.[2] Dante speaks of it as the noblest kind of poetry, and gives rules, which were of Italian rather than Provençal development, for the formation of the stanzas.[3] In the Provençal type of it the rhymes of the first stanza were usually repeated throughout; and though there are instances of this method in Dante and Petrarch, it was not an established rule in Italian "canzoni."

Our poet employs three other metrical forms in the *Canzoniere* —the "sestina," the "ballata," and the "madrigal." The "sestina" was an invention of the troubadour Arnaud Daniel. This extremely artificial product was so called because it consisted of six stanzas of six lines each, with a "tornada" or "refrain" of three lines; there is no rhyme, and the concluding words of each line in the first stanza are repeated in the following stanzas, but in a different and strictly prescribed order. This form was first introduced into Italian by Dante[4]; and Petrarch has nine examples of it, in which his style seems cramped by its rigid rules. It has been aptly compared to change-ringing,[5] but its difficulty has been an obstacle to most poets. Sir Philip Sidney has employed the "double sestine" (twelve stanzas) in a dialogue between two rival shepherds in the *Arcadia*.[6] A late French form of the "sestina," which introduces rhymes within each stanza, has been used with success by Mr. Swinburne; but

[1] F. Hueffer (*The Troubadours*, 1878, p. 106), and Snell (*op. cit.*), p. 104. The latter, however, is wrong in calling these "the earliest sonnets known." There were Italian specimens long before.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 63. I cannot see that this disproves the Provençal origin of the "Canzone."

[3] *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, II. caps. 3 to 14.

[4] In his "Al poco giorno," translated by D. G. Rossetti in his *Dante and his Circle* (1892), pp. 113, 114.

[5] Snell, p. 107.

[6] Between Strephon and Klaius (*Works*, about 1670, Lib. II. pp. 216, 217). P.'s Sestina IX. ("Mia benigna fortuna") is a double one, and doubtless Sidney's model.

this modification is really a total departure from the original form.[1]

A much more popular metrical variety was the "Ballata," which in Provence was sung as an accompaniment to the dance. It begins with the refrain or "ripresa" of three or four lines, intended originally to be taken up by a chorus after each succeeding stanza had been sung by a solo voice; the last word of the "ripresa" always rhymes with the last word of the stanza, however many rhymes or lines may have intervened. Dante has seven "ballate," three of which he inserted in the *Vita Nuova*, but some of these are irregular in form. Petrarch has a similar number, which are regular; they consist of a single stanza of varying length, following the "ripresa." In a note to the autograph copy of his last "Ballata" he styles the measure "cantio plebeia"[2]; it seems strange that he should have employed this form, which (at least in Provence) was associated with gaiety, among his poems of lament for "Laura." But in Italy its connexion with dance-music had long been entirely lost; it was simply a popular variety of love-lyric. Petrarch has four short "madrigals"—a form of pastoral song, which became popular in Italy about the time of his birth. This, too, had lost its original character of a rustic idyll, and had been pressed into the service of love. It simply consists of two or three triplets, followed by a couplet or (as once in Petrarch[3]) by a quatrain. It was employed by Dante's contemporaries Lapo Gianni and Cino da Pistoia,[4] but never by the sovereign poet himself.

It is thus plain that Petrarch's efforts after an original style did not extend to the invention of new poetic measures. Of the five which he employs in the *Canzoniere*, three were originally borrowed from the Provençal lyric, though in his own time widely current in Italian poetry; two were evolved in Italy and had already been elaborated by her poets. Petrarch's peculiar debt

[1] Hueffer, p. 105.

[2] Ball. VII. ("Amor quando fioria"). See Mestica (*Rime di F. P.*, Florence, 1896), p. 453.

[3] Madr. II. ("Perch' al viso"). Madr. IV. ("Or vedi amor") ends with a triplet.

[4] These madrigals, with another by Guido Orlandi (to Guido Cavalcanti), are translated by D. G. Rossetti (*op. cit.*), pp. 122, 168, and 207. But Giosué Carducci (*Studi Letterari*, Bologna, 1893, p. 333) says that these are not true madrigals.

to Provence is his sense of the supreme importance of form and technique. It was his close acquaintance with their musical language and rules of harmony that enabled him to fashion the Italian sonnet into an unrivalled vehicle for the expression of a single thought. Probably all the poems of the chief troubadours were written to be sung to music; and he must have been familiar with many of the melodies (now lost) which were employed for that purpose. We know that it was his practice to test the rhythm of his own compositions by singing them to his lute; and he must, therefore, have had some tune—or at least some special cadence—adapted to each poetic measure. Of his powers as a performer we know nothing. Perhaps they were quite mediocre; but his ear was intensely sensitive to any want of harmony in the sounds and could not rest till the lines were absolutely smooth. Perhaps this is the secret of the incomparable finish of his best pieces; and so far the tradition of the troubadours stood him in good stead.

But there was an evil side to their influence, which, even if their language had survived, would have consigned many of their lays to oblivion. Their facility of technical invention and their rigid observance of form led them into involved combinations and artificial conceits, which sometimes degenerate into verbal jugglery. Petrarch's exquisite taste has preserved him from their worst excesses, but he has by no means escaped scatheless. His frequent play upon the resemblance of his lady's name to "l'aura" (the breeze) and "lauro" (the laurel) is an instance in point [1]; and in one sonnet [2] he resolves the syllables of "Lau-re-ta" (a familiar form of it) into the duties of praise (lau-dare), reverence (re-verire) and silence (ta-cere). A similar conceit is found in a "Canzo" of Peire Milon, who maintains that "A-mor" (love) leads to "A!" (tears) and "mor" (death).[3] Neither the troubadours nor their Italian successors can avoid the insipid monotony of harping everlastingly upon a single subject; and the consequence is too often an extreme elaboration of frigid metaphor. Thus "Laura" is

[1] C. Tomlinson (*The Sonnet*, 1874, p. 41) says that in the early edition of 1472 (it is not the earliest, as he states) the printers, not having yet invented the apostrophe, produce much confusion by writing "l'aura" and "Laura" in the same way.

[2] S. 5.

[3] E. Baret (*Les Troubadours*, Paris, 1867), p. 184.

the sun, her "countenance is a sun, her person a sun, her eyes are suns, her hair a sun." In the 217th sonnet heaven is enamoured of the earth on account of "Laura" not less than the earth is enamoured of heaven on account of the sun. If the sun rises before "Laura," he is very bright, but as "Laura" gets up, "his lustre becomes dim." These conceits were copied and so much exaggerated by "Petrarchists" of a later day that Salvator Rosa complains in his satires that they "had exhausted the sun." [1]

It was in their countless methods of varying the construction of the "Canzo" that the Provençal poets accomplished their most amazing feats of metrical legerdemain. The "stanza" was the base of their system; its lines might be of very various length and formation, but within the same composition they must conform to strict laws both of rhyme and metre. The disposition of the rhymes seems to have been partly governed by the music to which each stanza was sung, so that they concurred with a particular modulation of the air. Petrarch has at least three Canzoni which are plainly on such Provençal models. In the XIXth ("S' i' l' dissi"), consisting of six stanzas of nine lines each and an "envoi" [2] of five, the opening words are repeated at the beginning of the 1st, 3rd and 5th lines of the first four stanzas; the contrary (negative) supposition begins the remaining two. There are only three rhymes in the whole poem; but they are so artfully disposed that the stanzas fall into three pairs, in which each rhyme takes a different position.[3] This system is plainly to correspond with a "lilt" in the music; and the device is said to be copied from a "Canzo" of the martial troubadour, Bertrand de Born,[4] who lived at the end of the twelfth century. Canzone III.[5] is still more astonishing. It consists of eight seven-line stanzas and an "envoi" of two. In accordance

[1] Tomlinson, pp. 42, 43.

[2] The Italian term is "congedo" or "commiato."

[3] The rhymes are arranged in this way: First pair of stanzas, 122113331; second pair, 233221112; third pair, 311332223; envoi, 32211–3. Thus the first rhyme occurs four times in the first pair, thrice in the second, twice in the third; the second rhyme twice in the first, four times in the second, thrice in the third; the third rhyme thrice in the first, twice in the second, four times in the third. In the "envoi" (through a middle rhyme in the last line) they all appear twice.

[4] Scarano (Introd. to *op. cit.*), pp. 250–267. The Provençals called it an "Escondig." Gaspary, 490, n.

[5] C. III. ("Verdi panni").

with a scheme invented by Arnaud Daniel and called "rims espars," there are no rhymes within the stanza; but the corresponding lines of the several stanzas rhyme together; and not only this, but the second and third syllables of the fourth line and the fourth and fifth syllables of the sixth line of each stanza have a corresponding rhyme in all the stanzas. The "envoi" repeats the rhymes of the last two lines of every stanza. It may be remarked as an extraordinary instance of Petrarch's technical skill that there are only two or three instances in this elaborate scheme of a rhyme-word repeated. Canzone XI.[1] is a still more marvellous example of the wealth of Italian rhyme. There are six stanzas of fifteen lines each, with seven terminal rhymes, all of which are repeated twice and the fourth thrice in the corresponding place in each stanza. But besides this, ten times in each stanza the last word of a line rhymes in the middle of the next; the places where this "medial rhyme" is absent are (with one exception) towards the end of the stanza, where the terminal rhymes are consecutive.[2] In one respect, however, this Canzone is less amazing than the two preceding. It does not consist of a single theme, but of a series of proverbs or riddles—strung together at haphazard and often unintelligible; it therefore seems destitute of poetic value. It might almost have been composed for a wager that the poet would be able to include more than 150 rhyme-beats in a single Canzone. There was probably some Provençal model for this *tour de force*, though it has not yet been discovered; for the poem was evidently meant to be sung to music.

We should, however, do grave wrong to our poet if we estimated his artistic merits by these occasional eccentricities. Before he began to write, the Italian "Canzone" had grown to be an instrument of expression far superior to the Provençal "Canzo"; and he was destined to raise it to heights of lyrical splendour hitherto unsurpassed. The theory of the "stanza" had already been expounded by Dante in his *De Vulgari*

[1] C. XI. ("Mai non vo' piu").

[2] *E.g.*:

> "Mai non vo' piu cantar, com' io soleva
> Ch' altri non m' intendeva; ond' ebbi scorno
> E puomi in bel soggiorno esser molesto."—1–3.

The fourth line is always the exception.

Eloquentia.[1] That exposition was based upon Provençal as well as upon Italian models; but it is a scientific advance upon the shifting tricks and expedients of the troubadours. Petrarch, by exclusively adopting in his more serious Canzoni the lines of eleven and seven syllables as the norm instead of the shorter lines often found before, gave to this instrument a majestic intonation which fitted it for loftier subjects than that of Love. By universal consent his best poems of this kind are those in which his patriotic and religious aspirations have enabled him for the moment to forget his amorous complaint. Though the Provençal poets were mainly occupied with the latter subject, they had also their "tensos" and "sirventes," in which they dealt with martial, religious and philosophical topics; but these strains seem scarcely to have affected Petrarch's noblest lyrics.

Some of the early Italian critics, as Bembo, Castelvetro and Tassoni,[2] had noted and admitted the influence of the troubadours upon our poet. But the awakening of a new interest in Provençal poetry at the beginning of the last century caused it to be more carefully studied; and the extent of that influence was then seen to be greater than had been supposed. Signor Scarano says that his imitations are direct and flagrant, and detract somewhat from his claim to originality. But he adds that Petrarch often borrows only the crude idea of some metaphor and develops it with rare art in the crucible of his imagination.[3] His skill consists not so much in saying new things as in saying them in a new way, which is a great improvement upon his models. Nor has he attempted to conceal his knowledge of the individual masters of the "Gai Science." In the third Canto of the *Triumph of Love*[4] he imagines a vision of his predecessors in amatory poetry. Beginning with the classical and Italian poets, he passes on to a band marshalled under a foreign banner.

"First of all Arnaud Daniel, great master of love, who by his original and noble style confers honour on his native land; and then the easy victims of Love—the first and the second

[1] Lib. II. cap. 10.

[2] In the Preface to his *Considerazioni sopra il P.* (1609).

[3] He gives Dante the same praise for his Canzone "Cosi del mio" and his Sestina "Al poco giorno."

[4] *Tri. d'Am.* III. (Mestica—it is IV. in the old editions), ll. 1–60. The troubadour passage here translated is ll. 40–57.

Pierre,[1] and the less famous Arnaud [2]; then those who fell after a longer struggle—the two Rambauts, of whom one sang of Beatrice of Montferrat [3]; and Pierre d'Auvergne the old [4] with Giraut [5]; Folquet, who has given his renown to Marseilles in taking it from Genoa,[6] and who at last changed his habit and profession for a better country; Geoffrey Rudel,[7] who employed sail and oar to find his doom, and that Guillem,[8] who by his song cut himself off in the flower of his age. I saw, too, Aimeric [9] and Bernard [10] and Hugh [11] and Anselm,[12] and a thousand more, to whom speech was as lance and spear and shield and helm."

From the order of this list we can gather nothing as to their respective merits, except that Arnaud Daniel is considered *facile princeps*. This judgment of Petrarch was shared—perhaps inspired—by Dante, who meets Arnaud on the Mount of Purgatory [13] and speaks of him as excelling in verses of love

[1] The "first" is the eccentric Pierre Vidal—"the Quixote of poetry" (Sismondi, I. 135)—who fell in love with all and sundry, and married a Greek lady during his crusading exploits with Richard I. His fondness for allegory may be reflected in P.'s *Trionfi*. The "second" was Pierre Roger of Orange, the lover of Ermengarde of Narbonne.

[2] Arnaud de Marueilh (see below, p. 211) died in 1220.

[3] The more famous was Rambaut de Vaqueiras, who accompanied the Count of Montferrat, and died with him, in the Fourth Crusade. His love was the sister of his patron, Beatrice, the wife of Henry of Carret. The other was Rambaut, Count of Orange, who was the faithless lover of the Countess de Die, a lady-troubadour. See Hueffer (*op. cit.*), Chap. XXVI.

[4] He was one of the earliest of the troubadours, but lived on into the thirteenth century, and is always called "Le Vieux." He wrote an Invocation of the Virgin, which is said to have inspired P.'s famous Canzone XXIX. ("Vergine bella"), and called himself the "Master of the Troubadours."

[5] Giraut de Borneilh, who was given the same title by others, died as late as 1278. Dante calls him (*De Vulg. Eloq.* II. 2) "the poet of rectitude," but will not allow that he (the "Limousin" of *Purg.* XXVI. 119, 120) surpassed Arnaud Daniel.

[6] Folquet (see p. 210) was the son of a Genoese merchant, but was born at Marseilles. P. cannot resist noting that in fact he was an Italian.

[7] Geoffrey went on crusade in 1147 and returned safely. He afterwards made a romantic voyage to see his "lady," Melisende of Tripoli, and died in her arms. See A. C. Swinburne, *The Triumph of Time*.

[8] Guillem de Cabestainh. See above, Chap. IV. pp. 108, 109.

[9] There were two of this name, Aimeric de Pegulhan and Aimeric de Belenoi, who are both said by Scarano to have influenced P.

[10] Bernard de Ventadour. See below, pp. 209, 210.

[11] Hugh de St. Cyr. See above, Chap. IV. p. 108.

[12] Anselm is said by Mrs. Jerrold (p. 115) to have composed a funeral ode on Richard Cœur de Lion.

[13] This tribute is supposed to be paid by Guido Guinicelli (*Purg.* XXVI. 115–133). Afterwards, in the same circle, the poet meets Arnaud himself, who addresses him in Provençal (ll. 140–147).

and epics [1] of romance. In the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* he again praises him as pre-eminently the "poet of love." [2] Modern critics have declined to join in these encomiums, and Fauriel even says that Arnaud was "lacking in imagination and sentiment," and that he was "among those who contributed most to the ruin of Provençal poetry by reducing it to pure mechanism, with no higher aim than that of astonishing the ear." [3] The only possible explanation of this strange discordance is that the fourteenth century possessed more and better poems of this troubadour than have survived to our own time. Eighteen pieces by Arnaud (all lyrical) have come down to us; but even writers as late as Pulci and Torquato Tasso mention him as having left metrical romances on Rinaldo and Lancelot.[4] His period was the end of the twelfth century, and he is said to have been a special favourite of Richard Cœur de Lion, with whom his name is connected in popular story.[5] He was of noble extraction, born in a castle in Périgord and well read in the Latin classics—an unusual accomplishment in a troubadour. Petrarch has imitated him in three sonnets [6] and ends the first stanza of a Canzone with the first line of one of Arnaud's "Canzos." [7]

An even more potent influence upon him was exercised by the Limousin poet, Bernard de Ventadour, whom he places near the end of his list. Bernard's refinement of expression, his "sweet incenses" offered to his lady, affected our poet more deeply than the formal experiments of the "master of love." This troubadour had an adventurous career. He was of low origin and learnt his art from his feudal lord, to whose second wife, Adelaide, he offered his poetic devotion. He celebrated her under a pseudonym; but his secret was discovered by his

[1] Dante uses the word "prosa," but F. Hueffer (*op. cit.* p. 46) maintains that he does not mean "prose" in our sense, but the epic measure as contrasted with the lyric disposed in stanzas.

[2] *De Vulg. Eloq.* II. 2.

[3] *Historie de la Poesie Provençale* (Leipzig and Paris, 1847), II. p. 41.

[4] See Hueffer, pp. 46–49. He calls Arnaud "the Browning of Provençal literature."

[5] For the anecdote relating to a contest before Richard I., between Arnaud and a jongleur, see Hueffer, pp. 49–51, and Longfellow's translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy* (1877), p. 438.

[6] S. 31 ("Io temo"), S. 177 ("Beato in sogno"), where A. Vellutello (*Il P. Espositione*, Venice, 1547, p. 177) notes the imitation, and S. 226 ("Aspro Cor").

[7] C. VII. ("Lasso me"), l. 10. For the remaining stanzas see below, p. 218.

master, who was displeased at his presumption and banished him from his dominions, apparently with the goodwill of the lady. He withdrew to Normandy, to the court of Henry II., whose wife, Eleanor of Guienne, had brought her husband vast domains in the South of France—the native land of the troubadours. He was received with kindness by the queen,[1] who pitied his sorrows and allowed him to pay her poetic homage. It is typical of the manners of the age that the "lady-loves" of the troubadours were generally of high birth and always married; and in choosing his "mistress" Petrarch, as we shall see, merely followed their example. The relations of Bernard with Queen Eleanor were without reproach; she simply allowed him to address her, according to custom, in the language of gallantry. The amours of these poets were not always innocent, but they were far less often guilty than is supposed. Bernard found a high-born protectress in most of the countries that he visited—in Provence and Northern Italy as well as in Normandy; his raptures, though always sweet, were of the professional type. Like so many of his minstrel brethren, he retired to a monastery in his old age, and died early in the thirteenth century. His numerous extant poems contain many references to the delight he felt in love's grief, which is a favourite subject with Petrarch. Each poet speaks of his lady's mirror as his sworn enemy, for it exalts her sense of her own beauty and high value.[2] Each compares himself to a fish rushing greedily at the bait and torn by the cruel hook.[3] These resemblances can hardly be ascribed to "chance or similarity of natural gifts"; they might perhaps be due to unconscious reminiscence from previous reading. So, too, Petrarch may have borrowed from Folquet—the troubadour, who became a bishop [4] and fiercely persecuted the Albigenses—the comparison of the lover to an insect, who is dazzled by his

[1] Fauriel (II. 31) says that Bernard was in Normandy in 1160–1164, "when Eleanor was duchess, and not yet Queen of England." The date is a mistake. Henry was Duke of Normandy from 1150 to 1154, when he succeeded Stephen as king. His marriage with Eleanor took place in May, 1152. Mrs. Jerrold (p. 116) makes the queen "wife" (instead of mother) of Richard I.

[2] Cf. P. in S. 37 ("Il mio avversario") and 38 ("L'oro e le perle").

[3] Cf. S. 177 ("Beato in sogno"), l. 14, and S. 219 ("In quel bel viso").

[4] The "better country," to which P. says he resorted (see above), was the Cistercian order. He was Bishop of Toulouse (1205–1231); and died in the odour of sanctity. Dante meets him in the Heaven of Venus (*Par.* IX. 37, 67–108), and calls him (through Cunizza's mouth) "our Heaven's most brilliant, dearest pride" (Shadwell).

lady's light and burns his wings by too near a dalliance.[1] Certainly his tone of reverent timidity in her presence seems to be echoed from the love-lorn Arnaud de Marueilh, who found himself eclipsed by a royal suitor.[2] Probably, however, many of the resemblances noted between Petrarch and individual troubadours are really fortuitous. In the language of love there are expressions that are inevitable and soon become common property [3]; it is never safe to assume that a later poet has borrowed from an earlier.

The remaining troubadours in the *Triumph of Love* seem to be mentioned for their general fame more than as a result of personal study. Their renown was more than a century old; but their poems were not then, as they are to-day, the fossil remains of an extinct language and social order, nor were they studied even in Italy simply for their literary merit. Their melodious language, though not spoken at the Papal Court (which remained Italian), was still the speech of the country-side; and the echo of their song continued to resound in many a castle and lady's bower around the mushroom capital of the Popes. The feudal chivalry of Provence, though decaying, was not yet dead. Perhaps for that very reason it was more self-conscious than in its heyday of life, and strove to fan the embers of its lost poesy into a blaze. In Languedoc, as we shall see,[4] there was a determined attempt at revival in Petrarch's youth, and the movement spread, though more feebly, into Eastern Provence. Among the magistrates appointed to Avignon by King Robert was Anselm Mortaire,[5] a Provençal poet; and another, Bertrand de Puzenas, is found even later at the Neapolitan court of Queen Joan. But these survivals had no original merit; the vein was worked out, and the wandering minstrels traded on the popular lays of the old masters.

Italian poetry, however, was still in the bloom of its splendid youth. "Our great lyric," says Signor Scarano, "was a graft

[1] Cf. P. in S. 17 ("Son animali"), and S. 110 ("Come talora").

[2] See above, Chap. IV. p. 108. Fauriel (II. 52) thinks that P. made a special study of this troubadour.

[3] See the excellent remarks of Tomlinson (*op. cit.* pp. 90–96). The meritorious work of C. A. Gidel (*Les Troubadours et P.*, Angers, 1857) makes too much of small similarities. The opening of S. 47 ("Benedetto sia") is said by Gaspary (p. 490, n.) to be taken from Pierre Vidal, by Rutherford (*The Troubadours*, 1873, p. 349) to be from Giraut de Borneilh.

[4] For Provence, see above, Chap. V. p. 158. For Languedoc, see Chap. IX. p. 294.

[5] So he is styled by Gidel (p. 99); Baret (p. 65) calls him "Mostier."

of the Provençal art on the old trunk of classical art, and Italy has acknowledged her debt." [1] He calls Provence " the poetic Orient " of Italy ; and the birth of Italian literature synchronized almost exactly with the ruin of the courts of Southern France through the Albigensian War (1205–1230). The troubadours were scattered far and wide by this Papal cataclysm. Some found an asylum among the princelets of Northern Italy ; others wandered as far as the court of Frederick II. at Palermo. Provençal literature needed the support of a " court " and of the manners of feudal chivalry ; but in the previous century Italy could not offer either of these advantages. She was engrossed by the wars of the communes with the German Emperors, and feudalism had never taken root in her soil. The thirteenth century brought at least a superficial change. Northern Italy from Lombardy to Venice possessed many small principalities which adopted the customs of chivalry ; and their native dialects were sufficiently akin to the Provençal for that language to be understood. Italian poets in these districts began to write love-lyrics in Provençal in imitation of their troubadour-guests [2] ; but those of the latter who travelled further south found indeed a refuge in the half-pagan court of the Sicilian Emperor, but had to turn their lays into the dialect of Southern Italy in order to make them intelligible. Thus Italian literature was born in the south in circumstances which made it at first a servile copy of the imported poetry. As Symonds well puts it,[3] " Frederick adopted Provençal literature, but, unlike the Lombards, gave it Italian utterance " ; he did this for political reasons " because he wished to found an Italian dynasty." The prevailing tone of the exiled troubadours, as that of their hosts, was Ghibelline and anti-Papal, though a few of the northern exiles [4] espoused the cause of the communes. Frederick himself was inclined to

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 261.

[2] The most conspicuous Italian troubadour is Sordello (see Chap. XII. below), born near Mantua about 1200, who in consequence of his love-affair with Cunizza, fled to the court of Raymond IV. at Toulouse, and in later life returned to Italy in the service of Charles of Anjou. He acts as Dante's guide in Ante-Purgatory (*Purg.* VII. 37–136), and is also mentioned by that poet (*De Vulg. Eloq.* I. 15) as having abandoned his native language for that of Provence. About forty of his poems are extant (Toynbee, *Concise Dante Dictionary*, p. 490).

[3] *Renaissance in Italy*, Vol. IV. (Italian Literature), p. 20.

[4] Gaspary (Eng. trans.), p. 52. The chief of these were Peire de la Cavarana and Hugh de St. Cyr.

scepticism, or at least to Mussulman laxity of morals; he and his maternal grandfather[1] have been styled "the two baptized sultans of Sicily."[2] Like the Italians generally, he regarded the Papacy rather as a political than as a religious institution; but he was strictly observant of outward forms, and required the same attitude in his subjects. With a similar kind of pose, he adopted the chivalric ideal of womanhood. He and his courtiers affected to be in love after the feudal pattern; they professed the humble veneration of the northern knight for his lady. Thus the Sicilian poetry, as is usual with imitations, tended to be conventional and artificial; its content was precisely that of its archetype, though it made some improvements in form. It was really an exotic, and the atmosphere of its production that of the hothouse.

Yet it rendered one supreme service to Italy. Hitherto, she had had no common tongue, but merely a congeries of dialects. The poetic efforts of the Sicilian school helped to found a literary language, which eventually prevailed throughout the peninsula. How this language came into being is a problem, which need not concern us here. The nearest to it of all the dialects is the Tuscan, in which, as Symonds remarks,[3] there is "something quintessential." Perhaps the infinite ramifications of Florentine industry and commerce contributed to the result. But Dante, who recognizes the existence of this language in the "Lingua aulica" or "Vulgare illustre" at the beginning of the fourteenth century,[4] distinguishes it sharply from the Tuscan, and apparently considers it as anterior to all the dialects, which are merely corruptions of it. Anyhow, the Sicilian poetry which has survived is so little like the local dialect that some, without sufficient warrant, have supposed it to have been rewritten at a later time.[5] The Sicilian school came to an abrupt close with the victory of Charles of Anjou at Benevento in 1266. But before this its productions had become widely current in Central Italy; and a new class of poets arose there in a lower stratum of society,

[1] Roger, King of Sicily (1129–1154).

[2] Amari, *War of the Sicilian Vespers*, III. 365.

[3] Chap. II. (*op. cit.*). It was Boniface VIII. who called the Florentines "il quinto elemento."

[4] *De Vulg. Eloq.* I. 19.

[5] This theory is Italian, and is opposed by Gaspary (Eng. trans.), pp. 65, 66. For the Italian authorities see his note, p. 344.

who freed themselves from the Provençal manner. It is said that the "popolo grasso" or "nouveaux riches" of Florence assumed the fashions of chivalry; yet the ideal of knightly love was really foreign to a mercantile community.

Fra Guittone del Viva of Arezzo (1230–1294) marks the transition from the foreign to the native lyric. In his first period he sings of love in the familiar Provençal style; but about the time of the Angevin victory he experienced a sudden conversion, which made him enter the order of the Knights of St. Mary. Thenceforward he tried to divest his poetry of the trappings of feudalism; but at the same time he became the victim of a Latin pedantry, which makes him harsh and obscure, and which was perhaps the result of his severer studies. He began as an ardent Guelf, and his best ode is a song of reproach against the Ghibellines, who had gained a momentary success at Monteaperti (1260). He contributed so greatly to the development of the sonnet as the vehicle for a single idea that he has been termed "the Columbus of poetic literature." [1] The expression is too complimentary, unless it be confined to sonnet-structure; and Gaspary observes that there is only a slight difference between his poetry and his prose.[2] Guittone's influence on Petrarch is almost negligible [3]; in the *Triumph of Love*, where our poet beholds the band of Italian love-poets, he speaks of his compatriot by birth in rather a slighting way.[4]

"Lo, there are Dante and Beatrice; there is Selvaggia with Cino of Pistoia; and Guittone, who seems annoyed not to be in the first place. And there are the two Guidos—once highly esteemed—and Onesto of Bologna,[5] and the Sicilians, who were formerly first and are now last." [6]

[1] By Capel Lofft in *Laura*, an anthology of sonnets (1814).

[2] (Eng. trans.), p. 88. There is a collection of Italian letters by Fra Guittone, which are the earliest specimens in the language.

[3] P. was formerly supposed to have taken the line in *Tri. d'Am.* (Mestica, II. 66, "Come d'asse si trae chiodo con chiodo") bodily from "Guittone's sonnet" to the Virgin ("Donna del cielo," translated as such by D. G. Rossetti in *Dante and His Circle*, p. 306). But that is now discovered to be later than 1500, so that the robbery is from P. himself. He took the idea from Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* IV. 35).

[4] As also does Dante, see *Purg.* XXIV. 56, XXVI. 124–126; *De Vulg. Eloq.* I. 13 and II. 6.

[5] The first translator in Bohn's edition of P. (1859)—Mrs. A. Hume (1644)—renders "the honest Bolognian"! The second—Rev. H. Boyd (1807)—equally mystified, omits the words altogether.

[6] *Tri. d'Am.* (Mestica), III. ll. 31–36.

The order of mention is probably, from the terms used, that in which they stood as lyric poets in Petrarch's esteem; he may have read the Sicilian poets at Naples and recognized that they were completely out of date.

The truly national poetry of the Italians began in Central Italy and is closely connected with the formal development of the sonnet in the hands of Guittone. The commercial activity of Florence in the latter half of the thirteenth century, which bound her to the new dynasty at Naples, led to her intellectual hegemony at its close. There is a transitional Tuscan school represented by Guittone, Chiaro Davanzati, and Bonaggiunta of Lucca. In the *Purgatorio* Dante makes the last poet confess that he had not mastered the secret of writing as Love dictates, which was the mark of "the sweet new style." [1] It is evident from a later passage [2] that the sovereign poet regards Guido Guinicelli of Bologna as the inaugurator of this "dolce stil nuovo." He calls him "the father" of himself and all the lyric poets of the new school; and in a sonnet in the *Vita Nuova* he calls him "Il Saggio" (The Sage).[3]

We know little of Guinicelli's life, except that he was a Ghibelline, and by profession connected with the legal studies of his native city.[4] In his early days he wrote poems in the Provençal-Sicilian manner, acknowledged Guittone as his master, and even sent him a poem for correction, addressing him as his "dear father." But in later life (he died about 1277, at less than fifty years of age) he adopted under the influence of Philosophy a style of his own, which is best represented by several sonnets and by his Canzone of the "Gentle Heart" ("Al cor gentile"). In these poems he describes Love not in the well-worn Provençal manner, but as an abstraction—almost an emanation of the Deity—in which the lady, though still described as perfect, almost loses her individuality and becomes the symbol of more exalted ideas. The chivalrous love of Provence, with its wearisome hyperbole, passes into a new spiritual region, which is inspired by learning, yet does not exclude the note of genuine

[1] *Purg.* XXIV. 55–60.
[2] *Ibid.* XXVI. 97–99.
[3] The sonnet "Amore e cor gentil" (trans. by Rossetti, p. 58) in *Vita Nuova*, § 20.
[4] In documents of 1266 he is called "judex," which Gaspary (Eng. trans. p. 99) explains as skilled in jurisprudence.

passion. It is far removed from the logical pedantry of Guittone's later days, for it becomes the conscious cult of the noble and the beautiful.

Guinicelli had some later satellites or contemporaries at Bologna, who followed his lead.[1] One of them—Onesto da Boncima, a Doctor of Laws—of whose poems about twenty-five remain—may have lived into the fourteenth century, as he was a friend of Cino da Pistoia. Indeed, the poetry of the University-city seems to be intimately connected with its law during the whole fruitful period of Dante's life. The dry Latin of the notarial records at Bologna is strangely interspersed with vernacular ballads and snatches of song[2]—a veritable picture on faded parchment of the marriage of learning with the new lyric. The old-world University, placed midway between the communes of Lombardy and Tuscany, impressed the rising native poetry with the seal of its erudition. Love became a form of transcendental science, as in the dialogues of Plato,[3] and contemporary fashion required it to be shrouded in the mists of allegory. Guinicelli and his followers felt that the imported lyric of the South was hollow and artificial, and they strove to inform it with imaginative mysticism. The effort was sincere in intention, but it moved on too high a plane to be more than a passing phase.

It was eagerly welcomed, however, in Florence, where the notary Brunetto Latini was awakening a new interest in science and about this time composed his allegorical *Tesoretto*. He was a political power in the wealthy Guelf city ; and his relations with the younger poets Guido Cavalcanti and Dante Alighieri were almost paternal.[4] The first of these was a mystical dreamer of noble birth and high intellectual power, who was wholly in sympathy with the new school of poetry. His more serious poems—especially the scholastic Canzone "Donna mi prega"—

[1] These are Guido Ghislieri, Fabrizio Lambertazzi and Onesto. See Dante (*De Vulg. Eloq.* I. 15).

[2] Gaspary, p. 105. See also C. Segré, *La patria poetica di F. P.*, quoted in Chap. IV. pp. 115, 124

[3] Especially in the *Symposium* and the *Phædrus*. It is a question where the new poets found the Platonic conception of Love. Scarano (pp 355–357) suggests Apuleius (*De Doctrina Platonis*), or St. Augustine, or some other Latin father. See Ugo Foscolo's *Essays on P.* (1823), pp. 4–6.

[4] Dante (*Inf.* XV. 82–85) speaks of his "buona imagine paterna," and a misunderstanding of this passage has caused the impression that Brunetto was his tutor, which is improbable from his great seniority.

soon obtained a wide celebrity. It is of him [1] that Dante makes Oderisi say in the *Purgatorio* [2]:

> " So has one Guido from the other taken
> The glory of our tongue, and he perchance
> Is born, who from the nest shall chase them both."

The saying probably represents the general opinion about the year 1315, when the words were written. The last line and a half may have been meant in the speaker's mouth to have no particular application; but Dante must have known that his readers would apply them to himself. To Cavalcanti he had dedicated his *Vita Nuova*, and he always speaks of him as his most intimate friend, though he had unwillingly consented to his fatal exile. But Guido had died early immediately after his return [3]; and Dante, soon to be himself an exile, must have been then regarded by all lovers of poetry in Central Italy as the chief living representative of the new school.

How far was Petrarch indebted to this " sweet new style " of Bologna and Florence? It is a question not easy to answer, and has lately aroused much controversy in Italy.[4] During his student-days the former city must have been full of the renown of Dante, who had died at Ravenna, not many miles away, only two years before Petrarch entered the University. We know that the first two canticas of the *Commedia*—which appeared before the *Paradiso*—had been already read by Giovanni del Virgilio, the Professor of Arts, when he sent his first Eclogue

[1] This is the general interpretation. Some, however (see the *Purgatorio* in the " Temple classics," annotated by H. Oelsner and P. H. Wicksteed), maintain that the " one Guido " is not Cavalcanti but Guinicelli, and " the other " " Guittone." Certainly Dante (*De Vulg. Eloq.* I. 15) calls Guinicelli " Guido maximus," and always praises him. But Rossetti (*op. cit.* p. 16, n.) thinks that he may have changed his opinion, and that it is doubtful whether Guittone is substantially the same name as Guido."

[2] *Purg.* XI. 97–99 (Longfellow).

[3] See above, Chap. I. p. 33, note 1.

[4] For the general independence of P. we have (besides the great names of Carducci, Hortis and de Nolhac) the studies of F. Persico, *P. e Dante* (1893, 1894), and G. Melodia, *Difesa di F. P.* (*Giornale Dantesco*, IV. and VI., 1897, 1898); for P.'s indebtedness we have those of G. A. Cesareo, *Dante e il P.* (*Giornale Dantesco*, I. 1894); F. Cipolla, *Dante e P.* (1896, 1897); A. Moschetti (1894), cited in note 2, p. 219); and N. Scarano, *L'invidia del P.* I have not been able to make an exhaustive study of all these works, and I speak here only of P.'s *Canzoniere*, not of his *Trionfi*, where the influence of Dante seems patent (see below, Chap. XLIII.).

to Dante about 1319.[1] The fame of the "sacred poem" must have riveted the attention of poetic students upon his earlier works and especially upon the *Vita Nuova*. Therefore I have not the smallest doubt that Petrarch read the latter and the most famous lyrics of the Bolognese and Tuscan schools during his University days. He may even have copied some of them or committed them to memory; but it does not follow that, during his later years of composition he possessed an anthology of them (if such a thing existed) or that he consciously imitated their language. He must have been well acquainted with the content and the tendency of the latest Italian lyric; nay, his mind may even have been saturated with Dante's contributions to it. In his seventh Canzone ("Lasso me"), after closing the first stanza with a line of Arnaud Daniel, he ends the second, third and fourth with the initial lines of famous canzoni of Cavalcanti, Dante and Cino.[2] This is, of course, quotation, not plagiarism; yet it shows a familiarity with the masterpieces of his predecessors. The question is, does the whole tone of his lyric and his treatment of Love warrant his claim to independence and originality of style? I think the answer must be in the affirmative, though he profited more than he cared to own[3] from the achievements of his forerunners. When Signor Scarano says that "Beatrice has the loftiness of the troubadour's ideal, the philosophical tinge of Guinicelli's, the individuality of the living creature; she is flesh and blood, lady and goddess, reality and symbol,"[4] one is inclined to dispute the view that the lady is as human as she is angelic. And when the eloquent critic goes on to assert that "Laura is now one, now another, of all these," he appears to minimize the new element which Petrarch introduced into the Tuscan conception of Love—the element of human feeling.[5]

[1] See *Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio*, by P. H. Wicksteed and E. G. Gardner (1902), p. 211.

[2] G. Cavalcanti's "Donna mi prega," Dante's "Cosi del mio parlar," and Cino's "La dolce vista." Carducci (*Studi Letterari*, Bologna, 1894, p. 83, n.) says that P. imitated Dante's canzone "in more than one place," but he does not specify.

[3] I refer to the passage in *F.* XXI. 15, translated earlier in this chapter.

[4] *Fonti Provenzali*, etc., p. 353.

[5] Symonds (*Renaissance in Italy*, IV. Chap. II.) has a striking passage in which he says that the "stil nuovo" knew no medium between the love of the imagination and the love of the senses. "The love of the heart, already familiar to northern races, hardly existed for him [Dante]. There was no feminine ideal in Italy as seen in Iseult or Guinevere."

Dante's passion, though real, is intellectual rather than emotional; in Petrarch's, on the contrary, emotion—or at least sentiment—has always a foremost place. In the poems after the death of "Laura" the feeling is sublimated by religious conviction; yet even there, the lady, while still lacking individuality, is always the reflex of her lover's intense humanity.

Petrarch felt a strong repugnance to the mysticism of the older school; it was too transcendental for his cast of mind, too scientific for his artistic sense. He sought and found, as Symonds truly says,[1] a *via media* between the conventional passion of the troubadour and the ideal love of the "stil nuovo." For him love has always "its life in feeling and its root in sense." Still, in striving to make his passion purer and more ideal, he borrows hints from the Tuscan circle, especially from Dante; while in his verse-structure and in the "motif" of several pieces, his debt to them is considerable. They supplied him with rules for correct intonation and also with many thoughts and images which he has developed with consummate skill. Signor Moschetti has perhaps exaggerated the points of contact between the *Vita Nuova* and the *Canzoniere*[2]; many of his "resemblances" seem due to similarity of situation rather than to direct reminiscence. But he is right in distinguishing between "inspiration" by the elder poet and "imitation" by the younger. When Signor Scarano suggests that Petrarch must have had the *Vita Nuova* before him in writing his eighteenth sonnet,[3] he surely infers too much from what may be a chance identity of subject.

Our poet owed much more to Cino of Pistoia[4]—Dante's friend and younger contemporary, who survived him fifteen years—than to the more mystical poets of the school. We have already seen[5] that Petrarch probably made his acquaintance at Bologna. But the Italian letter, dated February 20, 1329, and published in 1547,[6] which purports to be from Cino to Petrarch,

[1] *Renaissance in Italy*, IV. Chap. II., *loc. cit.*

[2] In his *Dell' ispirazione dantesca nelle rime di F. P.* (Urbino, 1894), pp. 43–45. To prove indebtedness must be shown not merely resemblance of subject (for the subject-matter in love-poetry is restricted), but similarity of treatment.

[3] S. 18 ("Vergognando talor") See Scarano (*op. cit.*), p. 260.

[4] L. B. Grassi-Privitera, *F. P. e il dolce stil Nuovo* (Palermo, 1906), p. 30.

[5] See above, Chap. IV. p. 123.

[6] The text was first printed by A. F. Doni in his *Prose antiche di Dante, Petrarcha e Boccaccio*, etc. (Florence, 1547), along with several supposed Italian letters of P. which are now shown to be spurious. I have

upbraiding him for deserting his legal studies, is almost certainly spurious. Its fabrication may be ascribed to an assertion in Squarzafico's life of Petrarch [1] that Cino wrote to him in this sense. It has been often quoted as authentic, but the circumstances are all suspicious. Such a letter would have been written by Cino in Latin, not in Italian; the statement that he had already composed a harangue in honour of Petrarch's doctorate is frankly incredible; and the picture of the poet "with lyre in hand" in the house of the Bishop of Lombez is a patent anachronism. Squarzafico, though not quoting any letter of Cino,[2] professes to give some sentences from a Latin reply by Petrarch, which is not to be found in his extant Epistles.[3] The "Cino" letter represents him as Petrarch's teacher in law, which has been already disproved [4]; and it is far from certain that the Pistoian jurist would have condemned his preference for humaner studies. In short, Cino's influence upon him was poetic, not academic [5]; the elder poet was a living link between the younger and Dante.

Cino, though a prosperous man as compared with Dante, had himself been the victim of political animosity and of an ill-fated passion. Born about 1270, he belonged to the party of the "Bianchi," and was compelled to leave his native city when his opponents became masters of it in 1307.[6] He retreated to the fortress of Pitecchio, held by the chief of that party, Filippo Vergiolesi, and there became enamoured of his daughter Selvaggia,

not seen the original of "Cino's letter," but only de Sade's translation (t. I. pp. 138–141). Doni's well-known affectation of singularity and the poor reputation of his *Libreria* are sufficient to arouse mistrust.

[1] This life, apparently written at Venice (end of fifteenth century) and printed in four folio editions of the *Opera F. P.*, too often appears—even in the edition of A. Solerti (*Le vite di Dante, P. e Boccaccio*, etc., Florence, 1904) as a patchwork, including extracts from earlier lives. See N. Quarta, *Delle relazione del P. con Cina da Pistoia*, Pistoia, 1909.

[2] He merely says, "Nec desinebat illum (P.) hortari ut studium illum persequeretur."

[3] A. della Torre, in his *Per la storia della Toscanita del P.* (in the Miscellany published in honour of G. Mazzoni, 1907, pp. 185–223), maintains the genuineness of these sentences; but N. Quarta, in the work just quoted, apparently takes a different view. I have not seen either of these works, so that they have not affected my view.

[4] See above, p. 123.

[5] The letter says that P. learnt by heart in four years the whole Corpus of Civil Law, which scarcely accords with his own account,

[6] P. Toynbee (*Concise Dante Dictionary*, p. 147) strangely says that Cino "was exiled" with the Neri "from 1301 to 1306."

to whom many of his poems are addressed. Both he and the lady were married at the time, so that his adoration was merely "poetic." After retiring for awhile to France, he returned to find his lady dead, and wrote a lament at her tomb on Monte Sambuca, a bleak fortress in the Apennines. He attached himself to the fortunes of Henry VII., and seems to have been in Rome at his coronation. At this time—and indeed much earlier—he enjoyed the friendship of Dante, who calls himself his "amicus," and addresses him in the fourth Epistle—if that be genuine [1]—as "frater carissime." They often exchanged sonnets; and in one of Cino's he exhorts his friend to resume the *Commedia*, which he had for a time laid aside. Dante quotes and praises him in his treatise on poetry, where he speaks of him (along with Arnaud Daniel) as the "poet of Love." [2] Cino composed an elegy on Dante's death, and his finest effort is a Canzone, in which he tried to console him for the loss of Beatrice.[3] Petrarch takes a hint from this poem in a sonnet of his Second Part [4]; the similarity of ideas is striking, and can hardly be fortuitous. After the failure of Henry's enterprise Cino devoted himself in later life to the study of Law,[5] on which he lectured at Siena (1321–1324), Florence (1324), Perugia (1326), and Naples (1330). He returned to Pistoia before he died in January, 1337, and there he lies buried in the cathedral of San Jacopo.[6] At that time Petrarch was at Capranica, and it must have been before he left Italy that he mourned his death in a sonnet-elegy.[7] He there represents his grief as deep and personal; and since he was not in Italy between 1326 and the month of Cino's death, they must have met more than once during his University career. Cino never forsook the Muse of poetry, to which his fame is due; and the elegance of his style is attributed to a sound knowledge of the Latin classics.[8]

[1] E. G. Gardner (*Dante's Ten Heavens*, p. 296) says that it is "usually rejected as spurious"; Toynbee, however (*op. cit.* pp. 148, 208), says that it is "commonly accepted as genuine"!

[2] *De Vulg. Eloq.* I. 17; II. 2.

[3] "Avvegna ched' io m'aggio," translated by D. G. Rossetti (*op. cit.*), pp. 164–166.

[4] S. 75 (Part II.), "Gli angeli eletti," see Gaspary (Ital. trans.), I. 490.

[5] He took his doctorate at Bologna in 1314 and published a learned treatise on Justinian's Code.

[6] For his monument there, see above, p. 123.

[7] S. 71 ("Piangete donne"). He speaks of his own "acerbo dolore."

[8] C. Segré (in the essay above quoted) says that a MS., now lost, attests this fact.

In his declining days Cino was almost the sole representative of the earlier school, of which Cavalcanti and Dante had been the chiefs. Many of his pieces are obscure—not, according to Gaspary,[1] from the abstruseness of the thought, but from awkwardness of expression. But that able critic is, in the opinion of some Italian judges,[2] far too severe on Cino. The latter rendered a service to his art by detaching it from the abstract—almost scholastic—methods of his contemporaries; his defect is rather an over-subtlety in introspection, in the minute analysis of the sentiments and feelings of the heart. In this, which is a new phenomenon, he is a true precursor of Petrarch, as he is also in the tone of deep melancholy which clings to all his productions. But if his lyrics are inferior to Dante's in force and clearness, they are superior to them in sweetness of modulation and in correctness of language. Dante himself praises him for this quality,[3] and in the following century Lorenzo di Medici says [4] that he was the first to soften the primitive rudeness of speech, of which traces are still discernible in Dante. Symonds [5] describes Cino's verses as having "the polish and something of the chill of marble." While this may be generally true, there are some of his poems—notably the sonnet on Selvaggia's tomb and the above-mentioned Canzone to Dante—which display a sincere warmth of feeling too often lacking in the philosophical school.

It is in the latter quality that Petrarch, though deeply indebted to both Dante and Cino, was able to advance beyond all his lyrical predecessors. With a finer sense of melody than Dante and a deeper introspection than Cino he combined a depth of sentiment and a sweetness of expression in which he excelled them both.[6] Though vastly inferior to Dante in strength of character and in range of creative power, he shows a more supple dexterity of craftsmanship in the perfect finish of his best lyrics. He must have been aware that, in the highest gifts of the poet, Dante was immeasurably superior to his contemporaries and to himself; and, if we regret the condescending, half-reluctant tone in which Petrarch praises him, we must remember his capital

[1] Ital. trans., I. p. 308.
[2] Scarano (*op. cit.*), p. 353.
[3] *De Vulg. Eloq.* I. 17.
[4] *Lettere all' illustriss. Sign. Federigo.*
[5] In Chap. II. of the work already quoted.
[6] I am, of course, considering Dante here only as a lyric poet.

delusion that Latin was the necessary medium for the highest kinds of composition. It is too often forgotten by those who accuse him of an unworthy envy that he expressly accords to Dante the pre-eminence in vernacular poetry.[1] His own efforts in that province he regarded rather as a pastime than as a serious literary achievement, and rarely alludes to them in his Latin works.[2] It need not, therefore, surprise us that his debt to his Italian predecessors is left unrecorded; no poet can fairly be expected to give away the secrets of his craft. In the *Triumph of Love* he assigns to Cino the second place among the masters of Italian lyric; in the sonnet on his death he expresses personal grief, but no distinct sense of obligation. Yet, whether consciously or not, he imitates him not merely in a few conceits,[3] which were the least admirable part of his work, but in the new turn which Cino gave to Italian love-poetry by basing it rather upon tender sentiment than upon philosophical imagination. This again, however, was inspiration rather than direct imitation; for Petrarch's improvement upon his model is amazing. I cannot agree with Signor Scarano's verdict that Petrarch would not have risen higher than Cino but for his sense of natural beauty.[4] That gift, which was new in literature,[5] is but a small part of his superiority. For the subtleties of the lawyer's trained wit he could substitute the warmth of the doting lover, the art of the practised stylist, the eloquence of the born rhetorician. No lyric poet can reach the highest rank without possessing some of the native gifts of the orator.

[1] *F.* XXI. 15 (Frac. III. 112). His words are: "Ita judico ut facile sibi vulgaris eloquentiæ palmam dem." Scarano, in his *L'Invidia del P.* (Turin, 1897), should surely have given more weight to this consideration.

[2] See below, Chap. VIII. pp. 277, 278. M. de Nolhac (*P. et l'Hum.* 2nd ed. II. 233) admits, after reading two articles by V. Cian, that he has insisted too much on P.'s affected disdain for his Italian poems.

[3] Gaspary (*op. cit.* p. 307) accuses Cino of the pedantic conceits called by the Italians "Marinism," from their later poet Marini. Cino plays upon the name of his mistress Selvaggia (as P. upon that of "Laura") by reproaching her with the "savage" cruelty of her conduct towards him. In the sonnet "In fra gli altri effetti," he compares her to the phœnix—a comparison employed five times by P.

[4] *Op. cit.* p. 355.

[5] See below, Chap. XV.

CHAPTER VII

HIS MISPLACED PASSION—WHO WAS "LAURA"?

AT an early stage in the period covered by the fifth chapter occurred an event of supreme moment in Petrarch's life—his first view of the lady to whom he dedicated his poetic genius for the next twenty-one years. On his side, undoubtedly, it was a case of "love at first sight," as we know from many poems written on subsequent anniversaries of that memorable day; but there is nothing to show that he became personally acquainted with her for some time. We may fairly suppose that "Laura" was originally unconscious of the conquest that she had made; and it is possible that, if not already married when he first beheld her, she became so before he succeeded in obtaining an introduction. He expressly implies that, till the "day of his fate," his heart had been untouched; in that time of liberty, before Love had tamed him, he was "wilder than the stags." [1]

After "Laura's" death in 1348, he wrote the following Latin note on the flyleaf of his Virgil, which (with one or two exceptions)[2] contains all that he has told us outside his Italian poems as to the circumstances and events of her life.

"Laura,[3] illustrious by her own virtues and long celebrated in my poems, first appeared to my eyes in the earliest period of my manhood, on the sixth day of April, A.D. 1327, in the Church of

[1] *Tri. d'Am.* III. 4 (IV. in the original order): "Io, ch'era piu selvatico ch'e cervi." This is equally clear from C.I. (Nel dolce tempo).

[2] One exception is his statement (*Ep. Metr.* I. vii. 37, 38) that she was of ancient, indeed of noble family, and that she was very rich (below, p. 245, note 2). Another (though resting upon a disputed reading) is—in my view—his assertion in his *Secret* through the mouth of the Saint that she had borne several children.

[3] The reading of the note is certainly "Laurea." Mr. E. J. Mills, in his so-called *Secret of P.* (1904), spends pages (pp. 69–72) in trying to show that P. would have written "Laura," as was his custom in Italian. But P. was well aware that "Laura" was not a Latin form, and no instance can be quoted of his using it in Latin.

St. Claire at the morning hour [1]; and in the same city at the same hour of the same day in the same month of April, but in the year 1348, that light was withdrawn from our day, while I was by chance at Verona, ignorant—alas!—of my fate. The unhappy tidings [2] reached me at Parma in a letter from my friend Ludwig on the morning of the 19th May in the same year. Her chaste and lovely body was laid in the Church of the Franciscans on the very day of her death at evening. Her soul, however, I am persuaded—as Seneca says of Africanus—has returned to heaven, whence it came. I have felt a kind of bitter sweetness in writing this, as a memorial of a painful matter—in this place especially which often comes under my eye—so that I may reflect that no pleasures remain for me in this life, and that I may be warned by constantly looking at these words and by the thought of the rapid flight of years that it is high time to flee from the world. This, by God's preventing grace, will be easy to me, when I keenly and manfully consider the empty, superfluous hopes of the past, and the unforeseen issue."

This note, though its existence in the fifteenth century has been proved, has been rejected as a forgery by those who believe that "Laura" was never married—that is, on purely *a priori* grounds. But, apart from its exact accordance with Petrarch's temperament, the study of his handwriting on the margins of his books has made its authenticity certain; and M. de Nolhac, whose knowledge of that writing is unrivalled, says that "no doubt on the subject is possible to-day." [3] The attempts to show from the *Canzoniere* that the first meeting of the lovers took place in the open country break down entirely, if due allowance is made for the poet's allegorical manner [4]; and the same may be said of the confident assertions that "Laura" died and was buried amid rural surroundings.[5] The poetic language of no

[1] That is, 6 a.m. at the service of Prime.

[2] Mr. Mills (pp. 78, 79) throws scorn on the use of the word "rumor." But P. plainly employs it in the simple sense of "news," and does not imply a doubt of the fact.

[3] *P. et l'Hum.* (1907) I. 140.

[4] SS. 148 ("Amor fra l'erbe") and 157 ("Una candida cerva") and Madr. III. ("Nova angeletta") are plainly allegorical; and in S. 47 "il bel *paese*" (which he expressly distinguishes from the "loco," the spot of meeting) need only mean that it was a fine day. I take line 10 in Ecl. III. ("deserto in litore") to be equally allegorical, meaning the "desert shore" of life.

[5] Mr. Mills absurdly quotes Part II. S. 60, line 4 ("Ite rime"), as proof that she was laid in an "obscure and mean" place. There is, of course, a contrast between the grave (the "dark and low" resting-place of her body) and heaven (the abode of her spirit). C. III. ("Standomi"), which he also quotes, is allegorical from beginning to end.

poet—of Petrarch least of all—should be pressed in support of conclusions which he contradicts in prose; and, throughout this chapter, I take it as a settled canon that a single statement of his in Latin prose should outweigh all the dubious inferences that have been drawn from the *Rime*.

It is safe to say, as has been said by a recent biographer,[1] that "we do not know" who "Laura" was; and I would add, with even more confidence than he does, that Petrarch intended to keep us in ignorance, and that the secret was as jealously guarded from his contemporaries, except a select few—perhaps half a dozen at most—of his intimate friends. Doubtless his poems were as widely circulated as was possible in the absence of printing; and there must have been much curiosity on the subject. But, if his numerous readers at Avignon had been aware who she was, the very popularity of these pieces would have rescued the fact from oblivion. I agree that the question is of no real importance to Petrarch's biographers; but I cannot admit Mr. Hollway-Calthrop's hypothesis [2] that "Laura" may not have been her real name, but only a nickname (like those bestowed upon his chief friends), suggested by the object of his ambition, the laurel crown of poetry. We have the most positive proof that he valued the latter distinction chiefly for her sake, because it was connected with her name [3]; and if his passion was a real one, as no sane critic now doubts, his poetic incense would have lost its savour for the person most concerned, if, when his secret became known to her, she had not been identified with it by her Christian name. That name would not give her identity away, for it was a common one in Provence; but it would be a real link between the lover and his lady, with which no lover would be likely to dispense.

Yet there must have been some good reason for all this mystery which can hardly be attributed to Petrarch's dislike of publicity for his own sake. The idea that his minor orders constituted the only bar to the union of the lovers is a figment of the imagination [4];

[1] Hollway-Calthrop, *Petrarch, His Life and Times*, p. 33.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 35. This is a different idea from that noticed below that she was a fictitious person, standing for the laurel crown.

[3] B. ed. p. 403. "Quicquid illi consonum fuit . . . coluisti, quam ob causam tantopere sive Cæsaream sive Poeticam lauream, quod illa hoc nomine vocaretur, adamasti."

[4] R. Garnett, in his *History of Italian Literature*," 1898 (Literatures of

he could, without difficulty, have obtained a dispensation to enable him to hold, as a married man, benefices without cure of souls; and if it were disgraceful—which it was not—for a tonsured clerk to marry, it would have been equally so for him to proclaim his love from the house-tops.[1] Nor was the secrecy due to her obstinate refusal of his affection; her disdain, of which he so frequently complains, was never made a subject of concealment. The reason of the mystery must evidently be looked for on "Laura's" side, and not on Petrarch's; the only sufficient explanation is that, at least in the later stages of his passion, she was in the married state. I should, therefore, traverse Mr. Hollway-Calthrop's further statement that "we do not know" whether she was married or single. In my judgment the inferential evidence in favour of her marriage so greatly preponderates as to make it a practical certainty. That evidence must now be placed before the reader; the various guesses as to her name and station, which are far less important, will be considered later.

First of all, a passion which lasted for twenty-one years, unrelieved by even the most delusive gleam of hope,[2] would appear absurd, if there were no natural obstacle to bar its felicitous issue. Such an obstacle there plainly was—not merely to Petrarch's love, but to his frequent association with its object. In the 186th Sonnet,[3] he places in the mouths of her lady-companions the complaint that they were deprived of her society by "jealousy" or envy; and there is even a hint that she was treated with harshness by those who claimed to regulate her

the World), says (p. 69) that his minor orders might have been an impediment, at least to the retention of his preferments. Yet he apparently accepts as at any rate credible the story mentioned in the next note; and that story, if authentic, proves that they were *not* an impediment.

[1] Girolamo Squarzafico (not an "anonymous" or a "fourteenth-century biographer," as in Garnett, p. 69) says in his *Life of P.* (prefixed to the B. ed. p. 4) that Pope Benedict, "the successor of Clement," (which he was not), offered to give P. a dispensation to marry "Laura" and hold his benefices, which P. declined, and that "Laura" on his refusal married another. This is probably a confused account of an Avignon tradition. If any Pope made such a proposal, it was perhaps Clement VI., in ignorance of her marriage, which would alone account for P.'s refusal.

[2] See the remarks below (p. 236 and note 3) on P.'s "sonnets of hope."

[3] S. 186 ("Liete e pensose"), ll. 7, 10. In an extremely obscure Canzone ("Mai non vo'") XI. he seems to refer to her abode as in "a dark prison" in which "fierce beasts" dwell.

actions. This sonnet is dated by M. Cochin [1] almost certainly after 1346, when—even if we accept the date of 1312 suggested by some critics for "Laura's" birth—she must have been over thirty years of age, and therefore hardly subject to parental control. The passage seems to indicate the authority of a husband, whose "jealousy" might find its excuse in the poetic tribute of Petrarch. Her coldness and disdain, of which the poet often complains, are in these circumstances explicable enough by her high principle—so warmly extolled by him—and by care for her reputation. On the contrary hypothesis of her maidenhood, her conduct becomes an insoluble riddle, which its advocates fail altogether to resolve.[2] One of the most recent is reduced to the gratuitous suggestion—made with the utmost assurance—that she suffered from a bodily disease, which rendered marriage impossible.[3] These are merely the shifts of the controversialist, which merit nothing but contempt.

But, assuming the reality of Petrarch's passion—a question to which we shall subsequently recur—it must be asserted that "Laura's" marriage explains, as nothing else can do, the varying moods from ecstasy through uneasiness and torment to remorse with which he himself regarded his love. This is no mere matter of otiose curiosity, like that of her family name; it is vital to our understanding of the man in his weakness and in his strength. We may concede that the advocates of her virginity have been induced to maintain their position by a tenderness for his good name; they have felt it to be morally impossible that poems of such exquisite purity of sentiment could be addressed to the wife of another man.[4] But in this feeling they altogether ignore the entirely different moral standard of the age of Petrarch. I have already alluded to this, in Chap. V. (p. 156); but I must again insist on it, not so much in excuse for Petrarch as in explanation of the fact. Unfaithfulness to the marriage vow was of course as much condemned then as it would be to-day; but

[1] *La Chronologie du Canzoniere de P.* (Paris, 1897), p. 34.

[2] L. Geiger, a stalwart champion of "Laura's" virginity, in his *Petrarka* (Leipzig, 1874), says (p. 219) that it would be foolish to guess her reasons. But he at once proceeds to do so, suggesting that her refusal may have been because he was a priest (which he was not), or because her surrender would have crippled his poetic gift, etc.

[3] Mills (*op. cit.*), pp. 41, 42.

[4] This is especially the case with Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee, who published anonymously (Edinburgh, 1810) an *Essay on the Life and Character of P.*, and with C. Tomlinson, *The Sonnet* (1874).

romantic homage in poetry to a married lady was tolerated and even encouraged by public opinion. Nothing was required but a discreet observance of the proprieties; and the lady's modesty would not be offended, if her personality were shrouded in a veil of mystery. Petrarch seems to have complied strictly with these conditions; but the credit for such compliance belongs, by his own confession, more to the obstinate virtue of " Laura " than to his own sense of right. Judged by our modern standards, such a passion was not innocent,[1] as, in course of time, he came to see with increasing clearness. Yet, after her death, he ventured to call it " honourable " [2]—when there were few living who knew the circumstances—because there had been no offence against public decency. It is here that the difference of moral standard becomes patent. The public, he thought, had no right to blame him for a sin of desire, which he hardly dared confess to himself and had never translated into act. He felt this all the more because, as compared with his predecessors in love-poetry, the purity of his sentiments and of their expression in the *Canzoniere* gave him no ground for self-reproach. How far this merit was due to his own natural delicacy and how far to the sensitive ear of his lady may be matter of surmise.

The above considerations do not rest merely upon hypothesis, as they would have done if we had had no other document but the Italian poems. They are plainly deducible from his Latin works, especially from his dialogue with St. Augustine in the *Secret;* and I must here express my conviction that much useless speculation about " Laura " would have been avoided if this work had been read with greater care. Volumes have been written [3] to prove that " Laura " was a country maiden, living not far from Vaucluse, to whom Petrarch paid court in his intervals of leisure. Yet his confessions in the *Secret,* written in the winter of 1342–3, and never intended for publication during his life,[4]

[1] Hallam, *Middle Ages* (1872), III. p. 483, Note iii.

[2] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. 2). In S. 61, Part II. (" Si onesto amor ") he uses the same epithet; but he is there evidently speaking of the purified love which he felt for her after her death.

[3] I refer especially to the works of Pusignan (1819), Olivier-Vitalis (1842), E. J. Mills (1904), and Professor F. Wulff (1904). For exact references see notes below.

[4] He expressly says this in the Preface to the book. In Fracassetti's *Epistolarium* of the poet there is no allusion to it; but in a letter of Barbato to P. in 1363 (the year of B.'s death), subsequently published by M.

prove to demonstration (1) that she constantly resided at Avignon, and (2) that she was not free to give him her hand in marriage.

(1) To begin with the first point.—Petrarch makes St. Augustine assert [1] that "this town [Avignon] has been, I will not say the cause, but at any rate the scene of all your ills, though, before you came back to it,[2] you thought yourself cured, and would have been so to a great extent, if only you had remained away." Later on the Saint says that he has often laughed to see Petrarch retreating with sighs to Vaucluse "and casting longing eyes back to the town." [3] The poet himself had already confessed that "the end and aim of all his travels *and of his retirement to the country* was the one desire to become free." [4] The exquisite sonnet "Rapido Fiume" [5] loses all its point unless "Laura" lived on the banks of the Rhone. In view of these statements of the poet himself, it is strange that the twentieth century should see a learned and able Swedish professor [6] spending weeks at Vaucluse and taking elaborate photographs in order to prove that "Laura" lived in its vicinity. The circumstance only shows with what success Petrarch has mystified the readers of the *Canzoniere* with regard to the person and the residence of his lady. We do not know that "Laura" ever went to Vaucluse in the body; but she was constantly present there in the mental obsession of its most famous inhabitant.

(2) When we come to the question of her marriage, the difficulty is greater, because Petrarch has carried his mystification even into the pages of his *Secret*. There is, indeed, a famous passage in the third Dialogue which, if the best reading were accepted, would enable us to dispense with inference altogether.

Vattasso in his *Del P. e di Alcuni suoi amici* (*Studi e Testi*, 14, Rome, 1904), B. asks P. to send it to him. We do not possess P.'s reply (returned to him unopened after B.'s death), but he would certainly have refused the request.

[1] Dial. III. (B. ed., p. 406).

[2] This must refer (see *Ep. Metr.* I. vii. below, p. 367) to the return in 1337.

[3] *Ibid.* "Suspirans, urbemque respectans" (p. 406).

[4] *Ibid.* p. 404.

[5] S. 173. In Chap. IX. I have conjectured that this belongs to 1333; but if it were of later date, the conclusion would be unaffected.

[6] Fredrik Wulff, *P. at Vaucluse* (Lund, 1904). This interesting brochure is written in English, though published in Sweden. The writer states (p. 11) that his opinion is shared by his friend L. Mascetta-Caracci, presumably in his work, *Gli amori del P.* (Trani, 1896), which I have not seen.

St. Augustine, in warning Petrarch that his lady may die before him, says that "that fair form, worn by sickness and by frequent *confinements*, has already lost much of its first strength." For the reading "partubus," which (in spite of contraction) plainly appears in the two MSS. at Paris, has been substituted by the folio editors that of "perturbationibus." In my judgment the Paris reading is much more suited to the context; the arguments against it are considered in a note at the end of this chapter. Prof. Bartoli, who believed that "Laura" was married, felt an insuperable objection on sentimental grounds to any allusion by Petrarch to his lady bearing children.[1] But to urge this is to assume that the poet wrote the Dialogues for publication, which the Preface expressly denies. The word is certainly a slip, if he was still trying to mystify posterity; and as such I am inclined to regard it. And yet for those who were in the secret there is a dramatic fitness in the word being placed in the mouth of the Saint; for he thereby intimates to the poet, at the opening of the discussion, that any attempt at concealment would be vain.

The question has been asked, why, if "Laura" was married, does not the Saint directly rebuke his interlocutor for loving a married lady? It is, I think, sufficient to answer that even in a private document (which might some day be read) Petrarch shrank from blurting out the truth in this indecorous way; that there was no need to confess it, for, with the omniscience presumed to attach to beings of another world, the Saint is supposed to know it already; and that the whole course of the latter's reproof plainly implies such knowledge. He makes the poet confess, in an unguarded moment, that he had desired, and even urged, the gratification of his passion, but that "Laura," when she saw him fretting against the curb, left him to himself—which probably means "banished him from her presence."[2] Petrarch excuses himself on the score of his youth and the strength of his passion, but adds that he has now learnt to be deeply grateful to her for her "firmness and constancy." The Saint naturally turns upon him and asks what has become of his loud asseveration that he loved

[1] *Francesco Petrarca*, Florence, 1884 (t. VII. of his *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, but printed separately, p. 189). His attitude on the point is rebuked as uncritical by A. Gaspary (*Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, trans. by N. Zingarelli, Turin, 1887), I. p. 480, note.

[2] C. I. ("Nel dolce tempo") is plainly a reminiscence of this interview. She answered (l. 83): "Io non son forse che tu credi," but afterwards forgave him (l. 134), "Vide Gir di pari la pena con peccato."

her soul only, and not her body. "You do not see—you who attribute so much to your love for her—how greatly, in absolving her, you condemn yourself; in proving her to be a model of sanctity, you confess yourself to be *a madman and a villain.*" [1] I need not point out that these words are strong, and that they plainly imply a moral barrier against his passion, which could not be overcome. There is a similar passage on a later page, where the Saint, in discussing the three remedies against love suggested by Cicero [2]—Satiety, Shame and Reflection—says that Petrarch knows well that, "as the case stands," the first is impossible for him.[3] St. Augustine is not here speaking of the virtue of "Laura"; and he anticipates the poet's protest that such a love as his could never know weariness with a smile of hardly suppressed incredulity. The remedy is plainly dismissed because there was a bar to it which could not be conquered by love.

It has been said [4] that St. Augustine takes up the position that all love is a sin, because it lavishes upon a human being the devotion which belongs to the Divine. Here we have the ascetic, the monastic view of love, against which all that was human in Petrarch revolted, while, in his more exalted moods, he was attracted to it as the Christian ideal. This argument, which is in keeping with the ascetic standpoint of the book, is certainly not lacking; and we can imagine that the Saint would have employed it undiluted, had the interview been real. But, curiously enough, he forsakes it when he comes to discuss practical means of cure; for the first remedy he suggests is that the poet should find a new object for his affections.[5] He represents this as a concession to human weakness, and warns Petrarch that there would be danger of his falling into libertinism, if his nobler passion gave way to one less worthy. But the proposal is a serious one, and of course implies that while the first love has been misdirected and sinful, the second need not be equally liable to censure. But the poet cuts the prescription short by protesting its impossibility; his love for "Laura" is such that beside her all others "are nothing, are mere darkness." Petrarch doubtless introduces the advice

[1] "Insanum scelestumque."
[2] *Tusc. Disp.* IV. 35.
[3] B. ed. p. 407. "Impossibile tibi judicabis, *ut res se habet.*"
[4] May A. Ward, *Petrarch; a Sketch of His Life and Works* (Boston, 1891). This lady admits the de Sade theory as to "Laura," but her line of argument is generally that put forward by its opponents.
[5] B. ed. p. 404.

as an opportunity for this declaration; but though he must have been sadly conscious of its literal untruth,[1] it surely proves that he did not regard love as sinful in itself or as inconsistent with his clerical profession.[2]

There are, however, other indications, besides those in the *Secret*, to show that even in the year 1333 he had come to regard his love for "Laura" as sinful. In that year he seems to have acknowledged it under the seal of confession to an Augustinian friar at Paris; for in a letter to this confessor of three years later he calls his passion "that perverse and wicked will," [3] and says that in the interval he had striven against it, and not without success. There is also evidence of a still later date, which has escaped the notice of his biographers. In a letter [4] undated, but apparently written between 1348 and 1351, he remonstrates strongly with a friend, who had fallen in love with the wife of another, and would not desist from attempts to gain his end. No conjecture is possible as to his correspondent's identity; but he probably belonged to the Avignon circle, and was sufficiently intimate with Petrarch to know the circumstances of his love for "Laura." We could not have been surprised if, in editing this letter, he had left out the allusion, which must have seemed inevitable, to his own case. Had "Laura" been still alive, he might have done so; but her death had augmented his remorse for his own conduct, and had taken away what might have been the sting of his correspondent's obvious reply. Petrarch closes his letter as follows:

"The advice which I have given you is that which I have taken myself. My old flame—or any glowing embers of it that still remained—has been checked by reflection, tempered by time, and

[1] When he wrote this he was expecting the birth of an illegitimate daughter (Francesca) by his Avignon mistress; but he may not have dignified his relations with her by the name of love. Signora E. Carlini-Minguzzi (*Studi sul Secretum*, Bologna, 1905, pp. 18–25) connects P.'s two ascetic compositions—*F.* IV. 1, and the *Secret*—with the birth of his two illegitimate children; but in the first case, this is doubtful (see note 3, below), as Giovanni was born in 1337.

[2] I am not sure that "professio tua" (B. ed. p. 409) means more than "Christian profession"; but if it refers to his tonsure (which would be a mediæval use of the word), it is love for the married "Laura" that St. Augustine there reproves.

[3] *F.* IV. 1 (Frac. I. 198) to Dionisio Roberti (April 26, 1336), "voluntas illa perversa et nequam."

[4] *F.* IX. 4 (to a friend unknown) *ad fin.*

but recently quenched by death. You are well aware that in this ' war of human life ' I have sounded the signal for a retreat."

Had his love been merely the courting of a coy virgin, who had persistently rejected his advances, he need not have mentioned it at all in this connexion ; his reference in the same letter to " the impassable barrier of female modesty " [1] which protects married women is plainly drawn from his own experience.

We may thus conclude from the Latin works with something like certainty that " Laura " was married. But it is not so certain that her marriage had already taken place when Petrarch first saw her in the Church of St. Claire. In more than one of his poems [2] referring to that day he says that she then wore her golden hair loose upon her shoulders, which no married lady would have done. And though M. Cochin hints [3] that there may have been allegorical reasons for this statement, it is hard to imagine what they could be. The poet let his fancy play upon the contrast between her appearance on that day and in after life—a contrast which seems to be that between a maiden and a matron. The line—

" La bella giovanetta, che ora e donna,"

in a Canzone,[4] which was written in Italy (probably about 1344) dwells upon the same contrast. If we can depend upon these indications, " Laura " could scarcely have been—according to the common view mentioned below—the wife of Hugh de Sade, if the latter were married in 1325. Her descendant the Abbé says [5] that that lady was three or four years younger than Petrarch ; and there are signs, as Prof. Flamini says, that the disparity in age between the lovers was greater.[6] According to our modern standards the poet's " flame " would be entitled to

[1] " Pudor ipse femineus imperviâ sepe vallatus est " (*Ibid.*).

[2] S. 69 (" Erano i capei "), ll. 1, 2 ; S. 163 (" L'aura serena "), 7, 8, 12 ; and *Tri. d'Am.* II. 136. Both sonnets plainly refer to the " inamoration." Professor Flamini (*Tra Valchiusa ed Avignone*, Turin, 1910, p. 157) cites Gautier (*La Chevalerie*, p. 396) to show that this was the custom with maidens.

[3] *Op. cit.* (note 1, p. 228) p. 103.

[4] C. XV. (" In quella parte ") l. 22.

[5] T. I. p. 131, n.

[6] See the work quoted in note 2, above. This may perhaps be inferred from S. 111 (ll. 9, 10) ; but Flamini's interpretation of Sestina VII. (" Anzi tre di ") and of C. XV. l. 28, seems fanciful ; if in the former a " day " stands for ten years, " Laura's " birth the day before would make her too young in 1327. But we do not really know the age of Laura de Noves. The " pauci anni " of the *Secret* proves nothing.

more sympathy if his heart had been irrevocably engaged before his lady entered the marriage state. No love-poem in the *Canzoniere* can be placed earlier than 1334, by which time "Laura" was certainly a wife. He may have written others which he did not choose to preserve; or he may not have made her acquaintance personally for some years after 1327. The seclusion in which young girls were then kept before their marriage (as they were until recently in many parts of France) makes it unlikely that he knew her till after that event. And it is remarkable that, except the rather doubtful word "giovanetta" above, he does not apply to her, either in his Latin or Italian works, any term suggestive of a maiden.[1] Certainly some of his expressions are indeterminate [2]; and while I attach little value to the argument that the "Castita" of the second *Triumph* [3] would only be used of a married lady, it is worth noting that of the six "historical" women mentioned in that *Triumph* only Virginia and a Vestal Virgin had not been married.

Against the above proofs of "Laura's" marriage there are only two arguments worth mentioning, both drawn from Petrarch's poetry. The impassioned pleaders for her virginity [4] make the most of them. The first is from the third Eclogue, in which Stupeus (Petrarch) prays Daphne (Laura) to crown him poet on the Capitol and obtains his request. During the conversation the poet, in warning his mistress of the power of the god of Love (Cupid), ends with the line:

"Beware, then, Daphne, who wouldst fain be free," [5]

from which his commentator concludes that "Laura" was single. If these so-called "pastorals," which are steeped in allegory, are to be taken *au pied de la lettre*, this argument must be applied to their whole content; and we shall have to decide that it was "Laura," not Count Orso, who placed the wreath upon Petrarch's head. But they were, of course, never intended for such a purpose. Petrarch here identifies "Laura" with the mythical Daphne (a

[1] L. Geiger (*Petrarka*, pp. 217, 275) quotes the "adolescentula" of the *Secret* (B. ed. p. 409), but that word is equally suited to the married and the unmarried.

[2] I think it has been proved (as against de Sade) that "donna" is so in Italian, and also that in his Latin works P. uses "mulier" of virgins.

[3] It is now established that P. called it "Triumphus *Pudicitiæ*'—also indeterminate.

[4] Tomlinson (p. 213) and Woodhouselee (pp. 213–215).

[5] "Tu, cui libertas salva est, tibi consule, Daphne," Ecl. III. 49.

virgin) who was loved by Apollo and changed into a laurel to evade his pursuit. But the poet, who is seldom satisfied with one meaning, also associates her with his own laurel crown ; in the line quoted he simply hints that she, who had so far defied the power of his love, may yet be brought to feel it. The second argument is drawn from five sonnets [1]—two in Part I. and three in Part II.—which are taken as indicating that at one time—certainly near the end of his long martyrdom—Petrarch had hopes of marrying " Laura," but that her death put an end to these hopes. Yet, in fact, there is not a hint of such marriage in any one of them. The first [2] merely affirms that his hope would last as long as his desire ; the hope was that she would confess that she returned his love. The second has been taken to mean that there was some old confidant or " go-between " in their loves—some third person—who whispered to the poet that he had nearly reached the goal of his desires.[3] But this is a misinterpretation. The " confidant " who told that flattering tale is the " sweet thought " that he loves not in vain ; and again the " goal of his desires " is here too, not marriage, but the knowledge that his affection is returned. The sad conclusion in the last tercet is that they are both getting too old for such a declaration. The three sonnets in Part II.—written, of course, after " Laura's " death—all seem to hint that the time had been near when " Laura " would have put aside her suspicions and allowed him to speak freely. But the second [4] of the three plainly shows that this was because he would have been too old to excite her fears any longer. In the third he says that he had expected this result in their old age, but that death had intervened and spoilt all. The language of the first of the trio [5] seems nearest to the conclusion for which it is quoted. Yet that is precisely the sonnet in which he speaks most plainly of the " cooling of his own fire." [6] No one can

[1] Part I. SS. 64 and 135 ; Part. II. SS. 47, 48 and 49.

[2] S. 64.

[3] S. 135. The word is " secretario," which Alfieri explains as " confidant of secrets " ; and " fra noi due " is not between P. and " Laura," but between P. and Love. The last mistake has led many astray, making them suppose that the confidant was Sennuccio Del Bene, who seems to have been in the secret. He may have been the person who gave a rose to each of them (S. 207), if, indeed, they were the pair of lovers, which is by no means certain.

[4] S. 48 (" Tempo era ").

[5] S. 47 (" Tutta la mia ").

[6] L. 2, " L'intepidir sentia gia l'foco "—the very expression of *F.* IX. 4, " favilla tepens."

read Petrarch's Italian poetry without seeing that to the last he cherished the belief that his love was returned; but it is just as evident that his heart told him this might be self-deception. In the interview which he imagines with the spirit of his beloved in *Trionfo della Morte* he presses her upon the point with gentle insistence, but only elicits the reply:

> "Whether in sooth you pleased my eyes on earth
> I now have nought to say." [1]

But the whole context is plainly meant to imply the affirmative; and with these fond fancies, as he knew them to be, he had fain to be content. In the same conversation she excuses the rigour with which she had repelled his advances by saying:

> "No other way there was
> To save us both, to guard our youthful fame." [2]

And in these words the poet admits, in my judgment, that there was a moral barrier between them which was impassable.

The conclusion, then, to which we are drawn by comparing the Latin works with the Italian poems is that "Laura" was married—if not on the day when he first saw her in the Church of St. Claire [3] and fell a victim to her charms—at least within a short time of that event, and probably before he knew her personally. With regard to this momentous day a small difficulty has been found in the fact that the date of the Virgil Note—April 6, 1327—was the Monday in Holy Week; whereas in the third sonnet he appears to speak of it as Good Friday.[4] The conjecture of Tassoni that in the Middle Ages the Crucifixion was

[1] *Tri. della M.* II. 127, 128.

> "S'al mondo tu piacesti agli occhi miei
> Questo mi taccio."

[2] *Ibid.* ll. 91, 92.

> "A salvar te e me, null' altra via
> Era a la nostra giovanetta fama."

Mills (p. 61) absurdly says "nostra fama" proves that as P. was unmarried "Laura" was so too; as if (in the contrary case) adultery in him would have been no disgrace, or less than in her.

[3] According to an old map of Avignon in 1650, given by T. Okey (in his *Avignon*, 1911), the Church of St. Claire stood somewhere between the post office and the Protestant church, near the meeting of the modern streets Rue de la République and Rue des Lices. The Franciscan church was further east along the Rue des Lices, and its site (in 1898) was occupied by the Jesuit College of St. Joseph.

[4] "Era 'l giorno, ch' al sol si scoloraro
Per la pieta del suo fattore i rai" (ll. 1, 2).

supposed to have taken place on the fifteenth day of the March moon, which in 1327 fell on April 6, may perhaps explain the discrepancy. But though ingenious, the explanation is far from certain ; and the poet may possibly, from a quaint religious motive connected with Holy Week, have kept the anniversary in after years on Good Friday,[1] and after a while supposed that the event had occurred on that day.

The mystery in which Petrarch shrouded the personality of his lady succeeded in baffling his early biographers, who show little knowledge or curiosity on the subject. Boccaccio, who wrote his eulogy on his future " master " about 1342, before he knew him personally, expresses the opinion that " Laura " was a fiction,[2] and merely represented the poetic crown. Domenico Rossetti thinks [3] that his words imply some doubt ; and in any case his subsequent intimacy with the poet must have changed his view. But in the next century, when Petrarch was regarded chiefly as the herald of the classical revival, the Italians show very little interest in " Laura." The biographies by Filippo Villani (end of fourteenth century), Lionardo Bruni (*Aretino*, 1369–1444), and Giannozzo Manetti (1396–1459) do not even mention her name. Paolo Vergerio (1370–1444) simply speaks of her pre-eminent chastity, and Sicco Polentone (end of fifteenth century) only says that she " soon died." The opinion that she had no real existence or that she was an " abstraction " for philosophy or poetry found many advocates in Italy before 1500.[4] Until the time of Alessandro Vellutello the Italian admirers of the poet did not

[1] In 1338 Easter fell on the same day of April ; and P. in the last line of his anniversary sonnet (48) alludes to the Crucifixion—" Ramenta lor come oggi fusti in croce." I am convinced that this sonnet was written on Good Friday ; but perhaps the indefinite term " volge " may show that it was not composed on the actual calendar anniversary.

[2] *F.* II. 9, is often quoted as proof that P.'s dearest friend, the Bishop of Lombez, was of the same opinion. It certainly proves that at that date (1336) he was not in the secret ; but in the metrical letter to him (I. vii.) of two years later, he was admitted to it and—as I have suggested below (Chap. IX.)—his doubts were probably not serious.

[3] *P. Giulio Celso e Boccaccio* (Trieste, 1828), p. 370, n. 27. This contains the first printed text of Boccaccio's little work.

[4] A curious instance of this is to be found in a Hebrew commentary on the thirty-first chapter of Proverbs by Messer Leon (apparently an Italian Jew), who flourished at Mantua (end of fifteenth century). He instances " Laura " as a shining example of female virtue, and argues at much length that she was not a myth, as was then frequently supposed. See the *Essay on Yedaya Bedaresia* (Hebrew poet of the fourteenth century), by J. Chotzner (1905), p. 78. I owe this reference to the kindness of the Rev. Canon J. Foster, D.C.L.

think it worth while to make inquiry into the traditions of Avignon.

But with the sixteenth century and the maturity of Italian literature Petrarch's fame underwent a change. His Latin works were still studied, as the many folio editions prove ; but far more attention began to be paid to his vernacular poems. The " Laura question " may be said to have been opened by the visit of Vellutello to Avignon in 1520. He was a Petrarch enthusiast, who had already decided in his own mind that " Laura " was never married, that she did not reside at Avignon, and therefore that the note in the poet's Virgil was a forgery. Had he kept an open mind, he must have acknowledged that the Avignon tradition supported that note in two important particulars—the meeting of " Laura " with Petrarch in the Church of St. Claire, and her burial in a chapel of the Franciscan church.[1] He had interviews with an old citizen, Gabriel de Sade, who said that he was himself descended from an uncle of " Laura " and that her will, which had been shown many years before to Louis XI., proved her to have been alive between 1360 and 1370. The latter statement, which Vellutello knew could not apply to Petrarch's " Laura," gave him an excuse for rejecting all that he was told at Avignon. He proceeded to Vaucluse ; and after investigating the registers of the neighbouring churches, found that a Laura or Lauretta,[2] daughter of Henri Chiabaud (or Chabot) was baptized on July 4, 1314, at Cabrières, a village on the hills between Vaucluse and Cavaillon, about three miles from the former place. He at once made up his mind that this was Petrarch's " Laura," and published his views in his edition of the *Canzoniere* at Venice in 1525. According to this theory " Laura " was never married, but lived and died at Cabrières, where she was buried. The Italians, with whom it was almost a point of honour for " Laura " to be a maid, embraced it with ardour. The hypothesis, however, was supported by no evidence, traditional or documentary ; it was invented in order to fit in with an arbitrary interpretation of

[1] Vellutello (p. 1, in his *Origine di Madonna Laura*, 1547 ed. of the *Rime*) says that this was a " common " and inveterate opinion. Though he knew of the Virgil note, it is not likely that any (still less many) of the Avignonese did. A. du Laurens (*Essai sur la vie de Pétrarque*, Avignon, 1839, pp. 245–250) justly criticizes Vellutello's procedure.

[2] In S. 5 (" Quand io movo ") P. makes a play upon the name " Lauretta," which is simply a familiar diminutive of Laura.

certain passages in the *Canzoniere*. Just doubts have been expressed whether any village registers were kept early in the fourteenth century; at any rate the entry in question was never produced, or properly certified.

But invention was not to be the sole prerogative of one side. Many editions of Vellutello's commentary appeared in Italy during the next thirty years; and its first publication had consequences which still further confused the issue. The people of Avignon were not satisfied that their ancient tradition should be thus openly scouted. Early in 1533 a Lyonnese antiquary named Maurice de Séves, and an Italian, Gieronimo Manelli of Florence, made researches about "Laura" in the city registers and induced the French Grand-Vicar of the Italian Archbishop to assist them in their quest.[1] Failing in these attempts, they examined the Chapel of the Holy Cross in the Franciscan church, which was the burying-place of the de Sade family; and finding there a slab ornamented only with escutcheons, they raised it and discovered among the bones of a female a leaden box fastened with iron wire. On this being opened, it was found to contain an old parchment, inscribed with a sonnet professedly written by Petrarch, and a medal representing a female figure with the letters M.L.M.J.[2] News of the "discovery" spread far and wide in France and Italy; and on September 8, Francis I., passing through Avignon for a conference with Clement VII. on the marriage of his son Henry with the Pope's niece, had the tomb reopened, beheld the relics, and composed a poem in honour of "Laura." A copy of the tomb-sonnet was at once forwarded by the Archdeacon of Avignon to Bembo, the leading Petrarchist of the day, in the hope that he would authenticate it as the poet's work. In his reply,[3] dated April 25, 1533, while expressing

[1] The account of the "discovery" is given in de Sade (t. II. Note iv. pp. 13–27).

[2] M. de Séves, who deciphered the sonnet (given by de Sade, t. III. "Pièces justificatives," No. xi. p. 41), suggested that M.L.M.J. signified "Madonna Laura morta jace" (an antique form of "giace"). Woodhouselee (p. 87) objects that legends of medals (as also monumental inscriptions) were seldom in the vernacular; but "Mea Laurea mortua jacet" would do equally well. G. Bayle (*Bulletin Historique de Vaucluse*, t. II., III., IV.) suggested that the medal was a plague charm and the letters the initials of the four evangelists (yet why transpose Mark and Luke?); but they may be interpreted in a hundred ways, and Tomasini's copy of the medal (*P. Redivivus*, p. 99) gives them "M.L.A.L."

[3] Text in de Sade, t. III., "Pièces just." xxii. p. 55.

pleasure at the news, he answered without hesitation: "Not only are the verses far below that marvellous and almost divine genius, but their style and erudition do not even reach the level of a mediocre poet." Such are the undoubted facts of the supposed discovery of "Laura's" tomb; and the advocates of Avignon were for the moment triumphant.

But it is perfectly clear that that triumph was the object of the "discoverers." They could point to "facts" as against theories; but they were confronted with facts utterly insurmountable. "Laura" had died (probably of the plague) on April 6, 1348, and was buried the same evening, when Petrarch was hundreds of miles away at Verona, "ignorant of his fate"; is it credible that on his return three years later he could have had the tomb opened and laid his poetic offering by the remains of his lady? A lame attempt has been made to suggest that the sonnet was the work of one of his friends, professing to speak in his name; but even so it must have been composed, and the medal struck, with astonishing celerity. The objection that the de Sade chapel in the Franciscan church was not built till after 1348 is inconclusive; for the grave might have been subsequently enclosed within the walls. The original parchment of the sonnet was in the eighteenth century in the possession of the Abbé de Sade [1]; but it perished, along with the rest of his documents, in the tempest of the Revolution.[2] His fond belief in its authenticity will be shared by few critics to-day. Prof. Bartoli [3] shrewdly points to the fact that it was de Séves who instituted the search, who read the decayed parchment, and who interpreted the medal. My firm conviction is that the whole business was a plot between this "antiquary" and his Italian friend, who composed the sonnet to order. The bald statement in the ninth and tenth lines that "Laura" was born and died in Avignon exposes (to my mind) the whole motive of the fraud.

[1] Baldelli says wrongly (p. 177) that it was sold by the sacristan to an Englishman. This was true of the medal and the box, which de Sade says "disappeared" about 1730; but the Abbé claimed to possess the original sonnet. Woodhouselee, however, asserts (p. 89) that it could not be the original because it was not sufficiently mutilated. This would seem to imply that he had seen it, but he does not expressly say so.

[2] The château of Mazan, whence he took them (the residence of his relative the Count), is said to have been sacked by rioters.

[3] P. 205. His excellent criticism, to which I refer the reader, is on pp. 198–207.

The examination of the grave would take some time; and the surreptitious insertion of the leaden box by one of the conspirators would be an easy matter. It seems strange that de Sade should have been content to stake the credit of his own theory, for which he had much better evidence, upon a transaction so suspicious.[1] The tradition of Avignon did not point to his Laura, who was only a de Sade by marriage, but to a cousin or half-sister of her husband.

Taking the order of publication, we may call this tradition the second attempt to identify Petrarch's "Laura" with a definite person; yet in reality it is older than Vellutello's, and goes back at least to the fifteenth century. It represents her as a de Sade by birth, whose relatives, according to one version of the story, had a residence at Gravesons, in the angle between the Durance and the Rhone—or, according to another version, at Thor, in the plain between Vaucluse and Avignon. These versions do not agree as to her parentage[2]; nor do their supporters agree whether she was married or single. Gabriel de Sade, in 1520, said that she was a daughter of John de Sade, and niece of Hugh (his own ancestor). But John de Sade was the brother of Paul, and therefore Hugh's uncle,[3] according to the Abbé's documents. If "Laura" were—as has been recently maintained[4] by followers of the second version—the daughter

[1] F. d'Ovidio (*Madonna Laura*, in *Nuova Antologia*, Ser. III. Vol. XVI. 1888) justly calls the "discovery" a caricature of the Abbé's thesis.

[2] It is curious that the first witnesses for both versions appear in Italy—for the Gravesons version in the edition of the *Triumphs* by Bernardo Lapini (Ilicino), Bologna, 1475. The Thor version may possibly be the older; but the date of its propounder, the Florentine Luigi Peruzzi, seems uncertain. It was first published by Bruce-Whyte (see note 4, below) in 1841; but in 1866 it was printed at Bologna (*Scelta di curiosita letterarie inedite e rare*, No. 69). The anonymous editor supposed that Peruzzi was a contemporary of P. Prof. N. Quarta (in *Giornale Storico della lett. ital.* Vol. XLIX. 1907, pp. 67–72) has attempted to show that it is a "rifacimento" of Lionardo Bruni's Life with new information, and therefore not written till L. B. was dead (after 1444).

[3] If Gabriel had meant the earlier Hugh (Paul's father) the lady would have been much too old. The Abbé cavalierly dismisses his statements by saying that, as he was about ninety, he must have been in his dotage (t. II. Note vii. p. 48).

[4] By A. Bruce-Whyte (*Historie des langues romanes et de leur litterature*, 1841, Vol. III. p. xxxviii. and pp. 372–380, and by L. Berluc-Perussis (*Un document inedit sur Laure de Sade*, Aix, 1878), who professes to find new (but inconclusive) evidence for this version. It is also adopted by J. B. Joudou (*op. cit.* in Chap. III.), I. p. 300).

of Paul de Sade by his first marriage and half-sister of Hugh, she was too old for Petrarch's "Laura," for she must have been born in or before 1290. It does not seem to be recorded whether this Laura was married or single; Mr. Bruce-Whyte's story of her seduction by Petrarch rests upon no foundation, and is contradicted by the whole tone of his *Secret*. The biographers of the Troubadours in the sixteenth century profess to give many details of a Laure de Sade, who was loved by Petrarch; but their statements are supported by no documents, and cannot be taken seriously. Still, the tradition persisted into the seventeenth century; and Tomasini, in the last edition of his *Petrarcha Redivivus* (1650), published a letter from Suarez, Bishop of Vaison,[1] in which it was supported by such proofs as were available. He mentions a picture in the possession of Richard de Sade, Bishop of Cavaillon, of a "Laura" in a scarlet dress, which is inscribed "Laura de Sado, Petrarchæ Musa celebris."[2] He also points out that the poet often speaks of her as "a star," and that a star with eight rays was part of the family escutcheon. But he adds no further particulars; and it seems impossible to fit this lady into the de Sade pedigree.

Until the publication of the Abbé de Sade's work in 1764, it was generally supposed that "Laura" was unmarried; and in Italy it was almost a literary offence to maintain the contrary.[3] The Abbé, however, produced such an array of documents in favour of his new theory as to silence for a time those who believed her to be a maiden.[4] He claimed to prove the identity of Petrarch's lady with Laura, the daughter of Audibert and

[1] The letter is given by Tomasini (*op. cit.* pp. 102–105), and is dated February 1, 1647). It states that she was the daughter of Paul, and was born in the suburb of Avignon, called de Sauze from the family. (This is from Nostradamus; the Abbé denies that there was any such suburb.) It also mentions the house of yellow stone, still called the "Maison de Sade," which is pointed out in Avignon near the White Horse Inn and the site of the Franciscan church. G. Bayle—a follower of the Abbé, and the best local authority—thinks this house old enough to be the original de Sade residence (*Bulletin historique et archéologique de Vaucluse*, September, 1879).

[2] This is in the Museum of Avignon, and is now said (G. Bayle, *Les portraits de Laure au Musée d'Avignon*) to represent Catherine de Cabassoles de Réal, wife of Etienne de Sade (1489).

[3] In the sixteenth century the academy of Ferrara formally decreed the Platonic purity of P.'s love, though one Cresci boldly hinted that she was married (Hallam, *Lit. of Europe*, II. 303, quoting Crescimbeni).

[4] It was accepted by such famous Petrarch students as Tiraboschi, Baldelli, Rossetti, Fracassetti and Cochin, though recently in less favour.

Ermessenda de Noves, who was the wife of Hugh, son of Paul de Sade. The identification rested mainly on the date and provision as to burial of this Laura's will, which was drawn up on April 3, 1348—three days before the death of Petrarch's "Laura." [1] In this document the lady says that she is "of sound mind, but weak in body," and desires to be buried in the Franciscan church at Avignon.[2] That church had been erected less than fifty years before; and the rich de Sade family had been benefactors to it—the lady's father-in-law, Paul, having built a chapel to St. Anne on the right side of the nave, while her husband, Hugh, built (perhaps later) another adjacent dedicated to the Holy Cross. The Abbé also gives the text of the marriage contract between Laura de Noves and Hugh de Sade, dated at Noves, January 16, 1325, and of the wills of Paul and Hugh de Sade dated respectively in 1345 and 1364.[3] These documents perished during the Revolution; but Laura's will was attested for the Abbé in 1762 by two notaries and seven persons of distinction. According to these family papers, Laura bore to Hugh seven sons and four daughters; and one of the latter, who was apparently not the eldest child,[4] was already married when her grandfather made his will (May 19, 1345). The Abbé states (without proof) that Laura's marriage took place in the same month as the contract, though its terms imply that the date was not yet fixed; but its provisions as to dowry [5] and the ages of her children seem to show that the ceremony could not have been long delayed.[6]

If the Abbé's documents are genuine, the probabilities in

[1] Bruce-Whyte (*loc. cit.*) maintains that, if she died of the plague, she could not have lived three days; but the Abbé asserts that the third day was the most critical.

[2] In connexion with the Virgil Note it is significant that P. directs in his will that if he dies elsewhere than at certain specified places in Italy, he is to be buried in a Franciscan church (*Test. Petr.* in B. ed. II. p. 1373).

[3] T. III. "Pièces justificatives," vi. xxiii. and xxiv.

[4] This was Augiére (referred to below). She is mentioned after Paulon, and the children's names are probably in the order of age. Augiére was married on January 1, 1345.

[5] Laura de Noves was entitled by the will of her father (deceased) to a dowry of 6000 tournois, which the Abbé (in my opinion absurdly) reckons as equal to 80,000 livres of his day (t. I. p. 129, n.). The dowry is to be paid in yearly instalments beginning from the following Easter.

[6] See note 3, p. 245. Prof. Flamini (*Tra Valchinsa ed Avignone*, 1910, p. 154) says that the marriage took place in June, 1325; but the documents give no proof of this.

favour of his theory are considerable; but, as regards the place of burial, the Avignon tradition is on a par with it, for a Laura *née* de Sade might also be buried there. It must be remembered, too, that the Black Death, of which the poet's "Laura" probably died,[1] was at its height in April, 1348; and in such circumstances it is quite conceivable that two Lauras of the family of de Sade may have died and been buried in the Franciscan church within three days. The Laura of Avignon tradition, daughter of John de Sade (brother of Paul), who was fifteen or sixteen years older than the Abbé's Laura, may have died at the same time; but this Laura is not mentioned in his papers. Petrarch has recorded two facts about his "Laura"—that she was of noble lineage, and that she was "very rich"[2]; and while Laura de Noves fulfils both conditions, we have no information as to the last point about her shadowy relative. Family tradition, however, is not to be lightly set aside; and, while I am convinced that Petrarch's "Laura" was a de Sade by birth or marriage, I am not sure that Laura de Noves was not too old, and married too early, to be the lady in question.[3] The Abbé lays great

[1] I reserve the discussion of that question for Chap. XXI.

[2] As to her wealth, see P.'s conversation with Donato Albanzani given in the latter's explanation of the Eclogues (quoted in Hortis, *Scritti Inediti del P.* p. 243).

For her nobility we have, besides this reference, the "mulier clarissima" and "sanguine nota vetusto" in *Ep. Metr.* I. vii. 37, 38. De Sade (in t. II. Note v. p. 27) shows that his Laura's father was a knight (chevalier), and that the de Noves family was illustrious in Provence. So (presumably) were the de Sades, as their arms were carved in 1177 on the Pont St. Benezet. But the riches of Paul and Hugh came from their weaving factories.

[3] There is a possible way of meeting these objections, which I give for what it may be worth. The documents say nothing of the age of Laura de Noves, nor of the exact date of her marriage. If she had been born in 1310 (her brother John, who was probably her senior, was under age in 1325) she may have been thought too young (at under fifteen) to be married in 1325. But since her large dowry made her "a great catch," the de Sades may have pushed forward the marriage contract in order to make sure of her; and the payment by instalments may have been due to this circumstance. The legal Latin of the deed is somewhat puzzling; but it seems to contemplate the possibility of the non-fulfilment of the contract—in which case Paul de Sade is to be indemnified for all expenses and interest without litigation. If the dowry payments were made *by weight* (40 "libræ" annually) I reckon that there would be six or seven instalments. If, therefore, Laura were not married till the summer of 1327, several of them would still remain to be paid. In that case her first two children (Paulon and Augiére) may have been twins—born in 1328; and the latter would have been sixteen when married—a not impossible age.

stress upon points that are inconclusive or even unproved—*e.g.* that a green and a scarlet dress (colours in which Petrarch says that his lady appeared) were part of Laura de Noves' trousseau, and that she must have been born at Avignon. The last point is especially doubtful, for there are passages in the *Canzoniere* which indicate that her birthplace was somewhere in the country stretching from the hills of Vaucluse to the Rhone—a situation that would suit either Noves, where the marriage contract was signed, or Thor and Gravesons, where other branches of the de Sade family had residences according to tradition.[1] I agree with Signor d'Ovidio [2] that, in Petrarch's mouth, the "picciol borgo" of the fourth sonnet may imply Avignon, as contrasted with the famous cities of Italy; but it is more natural to suppose its meaning to be that, though by residence Avignonese, she was born in one of the villages of the Comtât Venaissin, of which her father was "seigneur." The fragment placed by Mestica (it seems incorrectly) at the beginning of the *Triumph of Death*, the authenticity of which was once doubted, certainly points to Avignon—not, however, as the place of "Laura's" birth, but as the scene of the "inamoration." [3]

There are some who, since the Abbé's documents have disappeared, roundly deny their authenticity. That some one may have tampered with them is of course possible [4]; but they are far too long [5] and too abundant in detail to be entirely forged. Koerting, who declines to accept them,[6] does not regard de Sade as being himself the forger, but rather as deceived by some one else. In that case it is hard to account for the forger's motive, unless he was paid a heavy price; the Abbé merely describes them as "archives" of his family. Had he forged them himself, we might expect that the correspondence between them and the

[1] I should in fairness add Caumont, to whose hills its champion, Prof. Flamini, thinks that P. indisputably alludes (see p. 250, below).

[2] *Madonna Laura* (in *Nuovo Antologie*, Vol. C, July and August, 1888). See also his *Questioni di geografia Petrarchesca* (Naples, 1888). Flamini accuses him of ignorance of the district, but the study of a district with rooted preconceptions does not exclude all chance of error.

[3] P.'s phrase is, "Ivi, onde *agli occhi miei* quel lume nacque," *Tri. della M.* (Mestica), l. 19.

[4] Flamini (p. 152) boldly accuses him of falsifying the date of Laura's will.

[5] The will of Paul de Sade occupies sixteen closely printed 4to pages, and that of Hugh eleven pages, in de Sade, t. III.

[6] P.'s *Leben und Werke*, p. 695.

Canzoniere would be greater than it is.[1] In either case he would have given himself much expense or trouble for the mere pleasure of posing as " Laura's " descendant instead of her relative; and the motive seems hardly sufficient to cast suspicion upon his good faith. That he did not invent the wife of Hugh is proved by the fact that her existence is mentioned by a previous writer on the Venaissin nobility.[2] The latter accepts one of the traditional views that Petrarch's " Laura " was her sister-in-law, who, as the Troubadour historians[3] assert, founded in 1341 the Avignon " Court of Love " in conjunction with her paternal aunt, Stephanette de Gantelme, the " lady " of Romanin. Two writers of the last century,[4] who identify Petrarch's " Laura " with this eldest daughter of Paul de Sade, accuse the Abbé of falsifying the documents in order to prove his own descent from " Laura " and of suppressing the name of the unmarried lady. It is true that he does mention this daughter without giving her name; but possibly he did not know it, as she is not mentioned in her father's will. The accusation is unfair, because he did at least know that this lady, who would have been nearly forty in 1327, could not for that reason have been Petrarch's " Laura."

The Abbé's arguments are not well marshalled; and like all controversialists, he ignores or minimizes the difficulties of his theory. But, strangely enough, he lays little stress[5] upon what seems to me an inference (but no more) of some weight in its favour. Some of his opponents[6] have made the absurd

[1] Koerting unquestionably exaggerates this correspondence. To my mind the most suspicious circumstance is the mention of the " green and scarlet dresses " of Laura's trousseau in the will of her father-in-law twenty years (or rather less) after her marriage. The Abbé italicizes the passage, as if to call attention to it, though the dresses have been already mentioned in the marriage contract. Some have thought it suspicious that he had Laura's will attested by witnesses—a precaution that he did not take with the wills of Paul and Hugh de Sade. But surely the first was vital to his theory. The attestors—three peers, three ecclesiastics and one knight, besides the notaries—no doubt viewed the original; but whether they were sufficiently trained in the script to read it is another matter.

[2] Pithou-Curt, *De la noblesse du Comtât Venaissin*, t. III. (1743).

[3] John Nostradamus (son of Michael, the notorious astrologer and " prophet ") in his *Vies des Poétes Provençaux*, 1575, pp. 168, 216–218. His assertions, even if founded on tradition, merit little confidence.

[4] Bruce-Whyte and Berluc-Perussis, as cited in note 4, p. 242.

[5] He alludes to the passage in t. II. Note vii. p. 45, but not in the text.

[6] As L. Settembrini in his Neapolitan lectures (1869), and B. Zendrini, *P. e Laura* (Milan, 1875).

objection that "Laura" could not have been the wife of Hugh de Sade because Petrarch never alludes in his poems to her husband and children! I know only one passage—certainly cryptic enough—in which he seems to do so. It is in a sonnet,[1] written three or four years after her death, in which the poet bids his beautiful mistress gaze upon her lover wandering about Vaucluse, and not upon the scene of the first meeting (Avignon) or upon her home, where she found much to displease her in "her own people." The reference is studiously general; but we have already seen ground for the view that her husband was of a hard and jealous temper, who objected, naturally enough, to the poetic incense offered to his wife, of which he could hardly have been unaware. When Petrarch returned to Avignon in 1351, he would find—no doubt to his indignation, if the Abbé's theory be true—that Hugh had taken another wife less than eight months after Laura's decease.[2] There is also a story [3]—which is sufficiently vague—of misconduct by her eldest daughter, who may have given her much pain in her lifetime. Were I called upon, however, to "sum up" as judge on the whole question, I should, while speaking favourably of the plaintiff's case, recommend the jury to return a verdict of "not proven."

Within the last century four new theories have been advanced as to the personality of "Laura." They need not detain us long, for not one of them produces any evidence, traditional or documentary, to prove that the Laura supposed had any real existence. She is simply the imaginary creation of the theorist, who, in two of the four cases, had made up his mind, in spite of the most positive evidence to the contrary, that her early interviews with her lover took place in the country, preferably in the neighbourhood of Vaucluse. The first was that of the Abbé

[1] S. 37 (Part II.), ll. 12–14:

"Ove giace il tuo albergo, e dove nacque
Il nostro amor, vo' ch' abbandoni e lasce,
Per non veder ne' tuoi quel ch' a te spiacque."

I agree with Flamini (p. 161) in thinking that "tuoi" must mean "Laura's" kindred or the inmates of her home; though Biagioli (*Rime del P.*, Paris, 1521, II. 293) thinks it may possibly mean the Avignonese, whom P. disliked. But why should "Laura" share this feeling?

[2] The second marriage to Verdaine, daughter of Hugh de Trentelivres, took place (according to the Abbé, but he gives no authority) on November 19, 1348.

[3] De Sade (t. II. Note ii. 42) says that the Pope in 1351 consigned her to a nunnery for life.

Costaing de Pusignan,[1] who maintained that "Laura" was a maiden of the high family of des Baux d'Adhemar, asserted to have lived between Lagnes, a village south of Vaucluse, and the hill of Galas, which closes in the outer part of the famous valley. The second is that of H. d'Olivier-Vitalis,[2] who held that "Laura" lived near the same village, but was the daughter of Pierre Isnard de Cabassoles, a "seigneur" who was related to Petrarch's friend Philippe de Cabassoles, Bishop of Cavaillon. Neither of these works shows the slightest sense of the value of evidence; their authors prefer an arbitrary interpretation of passages in the Latin or Italian poems. The third, which has very slender foundations, suggests that Petrarch's frequent collocation of "Colonna" with "donna" (surely a natural consequence of the rhyme!) may imply that the poet's mistress belonged to the famous Roman family of that name,[3] which gave him his patron, the Cardinal, and his dear friend the Bishop of Lombez. No proof is given that any ladies of the Colonna family were then living in Provence, nor is it explained how "Laura" could in such a case speak humbly of the country of her extraction.

Of the fourth theory, which has lately been put forward with great learning and fairness by Prof. Francesco Flamini,[4] I would speak with far more respect, because it does not ignore patent facts[5] and rests upon at least the semblance of a traditional foundation. The writer exposes with much skill the weak points of the de Sade theories; he is ready to admit the authenticity of the Virgil Note and the probability of "Laura's" marriage. But he is impressed with the belief that the indications in the *Canzoniere* as to "Laura's" birthplace do not accord with Avignon; and he is fascinated with a traditional suggestion,

[1] *La Muse de P. sur les collines de Vaucluse, ou Laure des Baux*, etc. (Paris and Avignon, 1819). His view was adopted by Salvatore Betti in *La Laura del P.* (Modena, 1860), and in recent times apparently by Prof. F. Wulff. I have not seen the first work, but G. Bayle (*op. cit.*) describes it as "immeasurably beneath criticism."

[2] *L'Illustre châtelaine des environs de Vaucluse; la Laure de P.* (Paris, 1842).

[3] This is the thesis of Enrico Croce (*Cron. d. civilta Elleno-Latina*, II. 1–8, April to July, 1903). It is opposed by A. Zenatti (*Padova a F. P. 6° centenario della nascita*, 1904, pp. 11–14) and by A. Moschetti (*Atti e mem. d. R. Accad di Padova*, N. S. XXII. 1906).

[4] *Tra Valchiusa ed Avignone* (Turin, 1910). It is a development of the theory first put forward by him in *Giorn. Stor. della Lett. Ital.* Vol. XXX. 1893.

[5] As his follower, Mr. E. J. Mills, does in his *Secret of P.* (1904).

traceable even in the fifteenth century, that " Laura " was born at Caumont, a village about eight miles from Avignon, lying at the foot of some hills near the Durance and three or four miles south-west of the Sorgues at Thor. This suggestion is found in the unpublished poetry of Francesco Galeota, a Neapolitan sonneteer and warm admirer of Petrarch, who visited the haunts of his " master " in 1483, when journeying to the deathbed of Louis XI. No doubt Galeota found some one who told him that Caumont was " Laura's " birthplace ; but we have no clue to the sources of his information, and he does not tell us to what family she belonged. But the persistent tradition of Avignon was that " Laura " was a de Sade ; and a little north of Caumont, not far from the same hills, lies Thor, where (some say) that family had a residence, while just across the Durance [1] is Gravesons (whence Vellutello was told that " Laura " came) and Noves, the presumable birthplace of the Abbé's Laura ! Prof. Flamini, who is wedded to the Galeota tradition, is satisfied that none of these places suit the descriptions of the *Canzoniere*. He has discovered that the noble family of de Sabran were lords of Caumont and of part of Thor ; and therefore he will have it that " Laura " was a de Sabran, who married some personage at Avignon and was buried in the Franciscan church in that city.[2] He may be right ; but, if he is to convince the world, it would seem advisable for him to begin by offering some proof that a Laura, of the age and family indicated, ever actually existed.

It is a relief to turn from these profitless conjectures to a description of the real " Laura's " physical and mental characteristics, as portrayed for us by her lover. She was a " blonde " ; at the date of their first meeting her golden hair hung loosely upon her shoulders, and she was in the first bloom of youth. But there was something about her eyes which was uncommon in that type of beauty. The poet's description leaves their exact colour rather a moot point. Yet, plainly, they were not light-

[1] Prof Flamini makes the strange statement (p. 154) that Noves is eight kilometres from the hills of Caumont. By the evidence of his map (plainly a State map) it is much nearer than L'Isle is to Vaucluse—a distance of three to four miles.

[2] That Laura de Sade should have been buried in (or close to) this church in time of plague may be explained by the benefactions of the family to the convent. Prof. Flamini suggests no reason why his imaginary lady (who, he supposes, was brought from Caumont) should be accorded this privilege.

blue, as is so often the case with blondes, but dark; if not actually black,[1] they were of that profound azure which is sometimes the colour of the sea when its water is both calm and deep. Her eyebrows were black, and her mouth is styled "angelical, full of pearls and of roses."[2] In one Canzone he compares her to a palace, whose roof is of gold, its walls of alabaster, its gate of ivory, its windows of sapphire.[3] Her hands and feet were beautifully shaped, and her graceful movements suggested gentleness and modesty. It has been remarked that, though he often praises her mouth and the purity of her complexion, he says nothing of her nose—perhaps, according to an irreverent conjecture,[4] because a "snub nose" was then considered a constituent of beauty, and such a feature hardly lends itself to poetic description. We are not told whether she was tall or short; but the dignity of her gait and carriage, which is often praised, would perhaps imply something between the two, with a figure of exquisite proportions. On his first sight of her the poet heard her speak or sing[5]; and there was a melodious or sympathetic "timbre" in her voice which sank into the depths of his soul.[6] She could be vivacious, but she was not clever; she "cared nothing for verses or rhymes."[7] The Abbé de Sade thinks her conduct proves that she was secretly proud of her lover's worship.[8] However that may be, as soon as she discovered his passion, she was jealously solicitous for her own good name, and never gave him any serious encouragement. He often accuses her of pride and disdain, but in time he came to bless her

[1] De Sade (I. 122, n.) thinks that her eyes were black on the ground that P. thrice speaks of her glances darting from "the black and white" ("nero e bianco," C. III. 23, IX. 50, S. 118, 7). But to take this literally (rather than in the sense of "dark") would falsify the image of C. XXV. (see note 3, below). Those who think her eyes were light-blue rely on the epithet "serena," which may refer to the calmness of their expression rather than to their colour.

[2] S. 124, 10 ("Ebene i cigli") and S. 167, 10, 11 ("La bella bocca angelica, di perle, Piena e di rose e di dolci paroli").

[3] C. XXV. 16, 17. The figure of "sapphires" scarcely settles the colour, for these, in the modern acceptation, are as often dark-blue as light-blue.

[4] L. Gandini, in his special dissertation on this abstruse subject (*Come il P. non lodasse Laura espresamente del naso*, Venice, 1581).

[5] S. 69, 10, 11.

[6] S. 178, 6. "E l'cantar, che ne l'anima si sente." See also S. 134, 3, 4.

[7] *Sest.* VIII. 12. Perhaps de Sade (II. 472) assumes too much from this, which may be merely a lover's peevish complaint.

[8] II. 462.

for these rigours as the best possible defence of her virtue. She has been called " a heartless coquette " [1]; but when we consider Petrarch's frame of mind and his evident exaggeration of the least sign of her relenting, we should be disposed to regard the epithet as a calumny, if there was a real bar to the declaration of his passion. But if, during the whole twenty-one years of his attachment, she was free to give him her hand, and yet could not make up her mind to say Yes or No, she would fully deserve the title.

No existing portrait of Laura has the least claim to be considered authentic. We know that such a portrait was taken by the famous painter Simone Martini, of Siena, and that the artist gave a copy—probably a miniature—to his friend the poet.[2] But the latter makes no mention of it in his will, and he may have summoned up courage to destroy it in his old age. Of those which are supposed to represent her, the Laurentian miniature [3] is far the most charming, though, in spite of the beauty of the features, the lower part of the face is hardly suggestive of good temper. But we are assured [4] that it was executed in the fifteenth, not in the fourteenth, century; and the companion portrait of Petrarch hardly shows a trace of the good looks which he is known to have possessed. The frescoes in which " Laura " and Petrarch are supposed to have been drawn by Martini in the Spanish Church of Sta. Maria Novella at Florence are of doubtful attribution.[5] The Peruzzi bas-relief, discovered at Florence in the eighteenth century, represents an elderly, and not very comely, lady; it has dignity, but scarcely

[1] Macaulay on P. (*Miscellaneous Works*, cr. 8vo ed. p. 49).

[2] See below, Chap. XIII.

[3] This portrait (with a companion one of P.) embellishes a fifteenth-century MS. of P.'s *Rime* in the Laurentian Library at Florence. It is often reproduced, as in Mr. Hollway-Calthrop's book, at p. 32. A variety of it (but with merely a remote resemblance) is engraved in Lord Woodhouselee's book (1810), at p. 1, as " from an ancient picture." I mention in the text no portrait that I have not seen reproduced. I therefore omit the picture called the " Pandolfini Laura " at Florence, which is said (by Cicognara) to be really a portrait of Giovanna degli Albizzi, wife of Lorenzo Tornabuoni, probably by Ghirlandajo (1449–1494).

[4] P. de Nolhac, *P. et l'Hum.* II. 246.

[5] It is not certain that they are by Simone; but even if they are, they were probably painted before he knew P. and his lady. A fresco by him in the porch of Nôtre Dame des Doms at Avignon, which has wholly perished (though traceable in 1818), represented St. George and the Dragon, and contained a kneeling figure of a princess in a green dress, painted (according to tradition) from " Laura."

a trace of beauty.[1] The finder supposed it (with the companion one of Petrarch) to be the work of Martini (also called Memmi) on the faith of an inscription at the back of the tablet; but the date of 1344 there given is impossible.[2] The painting called the "Piccolomini Laura"[3] is also of a most matronly type, and was ascribed—no doubt falsely—to the same artist. The "Laura" in the Museum at Avignon is undoubtedly an ancient painting, but it has now been identified with another person.[4] Finally, in contrast with these mature portraits, we have the engraving in Tomasini's book[5] known as the "Colonna Laura," which represents a young girl—certainly not more than seventeen years old—with two necklaces of pearls and her hair falling in plaits upon her shoulders. I do not know the history of this painting, which bears the inscription, "H. David, F. (fecit)." It may be merely an imaginary portrait of the lady as seen by Petrarch on the day of his "inamoration."

NOTE TO CHAPTER VII

On the reading "Partubus" in the "Secret" (Dial. III.[6])

I feel some diffidence in dealing with this subject, because a full treatment would involve a careful collation of the best MSS. of the work and of the earliest printed editions, which is not in my power. It is generally said that all the folio editions of the Latin works (those of 1496, 1501, 1503, 1554, and 1581) have the reading "perturbationibus"; but whether this applies also to the earliest separate editions of the *Secret* at Strasburg (*c.* 1473, by A. Rusch, the "R-Printer") and Reggio (F. Mazalis, 1501) is not known to me. So far as I am aware, no scholar has yet published a study of the manuscript foundation on which the folio editions rest. But this

[1] A poor engraving of it is given in Lord Woodhouselee's *Essay on P.* (1910), at p. 177.

[2] See below, Chap. XIII.

[3] This is reproduced in the Marsand edition of the *Rime* (Padua, 1819, 1820), from an archetype said to be possessed by Antonio Piccolomini of Siena. It is given in Mr. Hollway-Calthrop's book, at p. 137.

[4] See note 2, p. 243.

[5] *Petrarcha Redivivus* (1650), at p. 88.

[6] See above, p. 231. The passage is p. 399 (B. ed.). It is Augustine who says, "Corpus illud egregium morbis ac crebris perturbationibus exhaustum multum pristini vigoris amisit." P. replies, "Ego quoque et curis gravior et ætate provectior factus sum."

concurrence of the folios need occasion no surprise. The errors (if there be such) in the earliest editions would naturally be repeated in the later; for it would be easier to reprint from an existing printed text than to return to manuscript authority. I have shown in this chapter that, before the sixteenth century, few Italians had any suspicion that "Laura" was a married woman. Consequently, the earliest editor, if he found in his manuscript the mysterious contraction "ptubs," which is said by Bartoli to occur in all the codices,[1] might think "partubus" inadmissible and adopt "perturbationibus" in its stead. It will scarcely be denied that such a contraction for so long a word (five letters representing sixteen) is without precedent. Therefore the certificate, which de Sade obtained in 1762[2] from the royal librarian Capperonier at Paris, as to the reading of two early MSS. in that library,[3] may be taken to mean, though it is deficient in clearness, that "partubus" is the word indicated by the contraction.[4]

Lord Woodhouselee (see note 4, p. 228), in his warm advocacy of "Laura's" virginity, seems to imagine a sort of conspiracy between the Abbé de Sade and the royal librarian to support the reading "partubus," invented (for his own purposes) by the former.[5] He actually says that "all the other manuscripts . . . have interpreted" the contraction "ptubs" in the two Paris manuscripts (which he assumes for the nonce to be the source of the rest) as "perturbationibus." But MSS. are not in the habit of "interpreting" their own contractions, and, in fact, while those of the fourteenth century (five in number)[6] give no support to the longer word, the form of the contraction (*pace* Prof. Bartoli) is different in almost every case. In the "capital"[7] codex at St. Mark's, Venice (Z lat. No. 476), the word is so evidently "partubus" that a glosser of later date has written in the margin, "Lauram virum habuisse exemplo comprobatur."[8] Three other MSS. of the fifteenth century in this library follow the same reading.[9] The Strozzi MS. (No. 91) at

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 189. But in a note on the following page he shows that this is a mistake by giving other variants.

[2] T. III. ("Pièces justificatives," No. xiv. p. 48). See also t. II. p. 114, n.

[3] These are 6502 (fourteenth century), and 6728 (fifteenth century).

[4] J. F. Costaing de Pusignan (1819) suggested "phtysmatibus," which (if it ever existed) was certainly unknown to P. Salvatore Betti (1866) preferred "purgationibus."

[5] *Op. cit.* pp. 168–170.

[6] One at Venice (Z lat. No. 476), three at Florence—Plut. 78, No. 5, and 26 sin. No. 9 (at Santa Croce) with the Strozzian No. 91—and the Paris 6502. Woodhouselee (p. 170) supposes that there may be two hundred MSS. in all! But Signora E. Carlini-Minguzzi (*Studio sul "Secretum" di F. P.* Bologna, 1906) enumerates only twenty-three.

[7] *Ibid.* Append. p. iii.

[8] Fausto da Longiano, in the life of P. prefixed to his edition of the *Rime* (Venice, 1532), says, "Laura certainly had a husband and children"; and in his commentary on S. 186 ("Liete e pensose") he says that "partubus" is the proper reading.

[9] G. Valentinelli's account of the MSS. of F. P.'s work at St. Mark's, Venice, in *P. e Venezia* (Venice, 1874), p. 98.

Florence (fourteenth century) has the contraction "patubs,"[1] which could not possibly stand for the longer word; while the MS. (also of the fourteenth century) at Santa Groce in the same city (Plut. 26 sin. No. 9), which Bartoli calls "most authoritative,"[2] had originally "ptibus," but a "u" has been written in correction over the "i."[3] This MS. is said[4] to have been transcribed at Padua by Fra Tedaldo della Casa, the friend of Lombardo and Salutati, from Petrarch's original copy of the treatise. It is therefore clear that, so far from de Sade and the librarian having found a "mare's nest" in the Paris copies, the earliest manuscripts are practically unanimous against the reading of the folio editors.

Lord Woodhouselee, however—though convinced by the light of nature that the manuscript evidence is all in his favour—adds that, even if the contrary were the case, the context would be decisive for "perturbationibus."[5] De Sade had maintained that if Petrarch had referred to "passions" and not acts, he would have used the word "multis" instead of "crebris"; and the Scottish writer has no difficulty in showing that these two words are often used interchangeably.[6] But when he argues that Petrarch's reply to the Saint, "I also am more oppressed with cares as well as older," must mean that the previous sentence, too, had referred to mental as well as bodily complaints, he surely draws a most unwarrantable inference. Petrarch does not say, as the Saint says of "Laura," that his *body* was wasted by disease (whether mental or physical). At thirty-nine years of age he was in the prime of his manhood; he knew that his health had been remarkably good and that he would not "age" so quickly as "Laura." Therefore, in groping for an argument to show, as against the Saint, that he might predecease her, he introduces the "new factor" of his own mental stress and worry, upon which he harps so much throughout the *Secret*, to reinforce his ardent hope that he might be spared the pain of losing her. I see, with some surprise, that Dr. Koerting decides[7] that the reading "perturbationibus" suits the context better than "partubus." If it appears to do so, it can be only at first sight; for in order to prove that he may die the sooner, the poet is not using the same argument as the Saint, but a different one.

[1] This was first pointed out by Baldelli (*F. P. e sue opere*, Fiesole, 1837).

[2] "Autorevolissimo," p. 190, n.

[3] *Ibid.*

[4] Minguzzi (*loc. cit.*), p. v.

[5] Pp. 170-177.

[6] It is curious that Cicero, speaking of veins and arteries, uses the two words together—"crebræ, multæque toto corpore intextæ" (*De Naturâ Deorum*, II. 55, 138). Professor Bartoli also points out that in Dialogue II. P. uses "creber" of affections of the mind—"reliquarum passionum ut crebros, sic breves et momentaneos experior insultus" (B. ed. p. 391).

[7] *P.'s Leben und Werke* (Leipzig, 1878), p. 639, n.

CHAPTER VIII

CHARACTER OF HIS LOVE—THE "CANZONIERE"

THE question suggested by the first title of this chapter has recently been discussed from the most various standpoints; it cannot be put aside, for the answer must vitally affect our estimate of Petrarch and of the quality of his poetry. We are attempting to study not merely the revival of letters, with the social and political phenomena surrounding it, but also an individual man, of extremely complex character, who possessed both the strength and the weakness of a consummate literary artist. It is, therefore, essential to ascertain whether the passion which inspired his most finished compositions was real or affected, whether its poetic expression was dictated by the deftness of the supreme craftsman rather than by the sincere feelings of the man. The question is, in the simplest words, did Petrarch love "Laura"—the chaste matron, so careful of her reputation—as desperately as he would have us suppose? Was it her actual charms and virtues which impelled him to sing? Or was he founding upon a passion, perhaps at first genuine, a vast superstructure of fictitious emotions, expressed in lyrics so tender and faultless as to win him immediate fame? Were his fame and the exercise of his craft the chief motives of his song?

If our sole knowledge of the man depended upon his "autograph" copy [1] of the *Canzoniere*, with its dated record of constant

[1] I speak of the Vatican MS. 3195, which is generally so called, although the earlier portion is in another hand—possibly that of Giovanni of Ravenna (see P. de Nolhac, *Le Canzoniere autographe de P.*, Paris, 1886). This precious MS. was undoubtedly intended to be the definitive copy of his poems. At least it proves—what we should hardly have guessed from his correspondence (but see Var. 9, of January 4, 1373)—that he was constantly employed in arranging and retouching these poems in the closing years of his life. The MS. was used for the Aldine edition of 1501, and has been the foundation of the best modern editions (those of Mestica, 1896, of Carducci and Ferrari, 1899, and of Salvo Cozzo, 1904). There is another Vatican MS. (3196), an "earlier draft" of many of the poems in P.'s hand—from which (and from another MS. also in existence) the final copy

revision in years long after his lady's death, I fancy that the second alternative would be most in favour. This record establishes the fact that, once at least, he composed a lyric to his lady, as still living, more than two years after her death.[1] We have seen in the sixth chapter that he was the inheritor of a double tradition, presupposing a feminine object of adoration—on the one side a beauty of flesh and blood, on the other an angelic being, subtilized into a philosophical abstraction. He was conscious of lyrical gifts which clamoured for an object of the one kind or the other; and an irreverent critic [2] hints that if "Laura" had not caught his fancy in the Church of Ste. Claire, he would have found some other, who would have served his purpose equally well.

To some critics this question as to the actuality of his passion is immaterial, if not impertinent. That, in effect, is the position of de Sanctis,[3] who would isolate the *Canzoniere* from the historic Petrarch and from his Latin works, and consider it only as a work of art. But an excellent critic [4] of the opposite school has justly remarked that you cannot separate art from life; behind the art stands the artist, and at least in the domain of literary art, moral considerations perpetually obtrude themselves. This is why the biography of a man of genius, whether in practical or intellectual life, possesses so peculiar a fascination. We long to know how far his achievements are due to some divine spark which is inexplicable, how far to qualities of temperament and character which he shares with ourselves. But in the case of a poet far removed from us in time, whose ordinary life has found no contemporary chronicler—as with Shakespeare—the material is seldom abundant enough to satisfy our curiosity. We are

was prepared. Both the Vatican MSS. were in the possession of Cardinal Bembo, who probably acquired them in Padua. They were sold by his son to Fulvio Orsini, who presented them to the Vatican in 1600.

[1] S. 226 ("Aspro core e selvaggio"). A note in Vat. 3196 informs us that it was written at 3 p.m. on St. Matthew's Day (September 21), 1350, in imitation of a Provençal poem which he had read at Padua. (At the time he was at Parma, not Padua, so he must have copied the poem). Finzi (pp. 99, 100) says that SS. 161, 163 and 164 were also composed after "Laura's" death, but he gives no proof.

[2] F. S. Kraus, *F. P. e la corrispondenza epistolare* (Italian trans., 1901), p. 149.

[3] F. de Sanctis, *Saggio critico sul P.* (4th ed., Naples, 1892).

[4] A. Bartoli, *F. P.* (Florence, 1884), in his *Stor. della Lett. Ital.* t. VII. p. 234.

compelled to draw from his artistic work conclusions which are always doubtful, and must at least be hazardous.

The peculiarity in Petrarch's case is that the artist was intensely self-conscious and has left an amount of material to illustrate his character, which bewilders us by its wealth and complexity. His love-poems reveal him as a man of infinitely varying moods, delighting in hyperbole—which is of the essence of lyric—not shunning even contradictions, for he regards his passion alternately as his glory and his shame. His prose works —in particular the *Secret* and his most intimate letters—confirm the above view of his character; especially do we see that this double aspect of his love was no affectation, but the torment—even the tragedy—of his life. But we also see him displaying an almost morbid delight in his own misery; we watch him analysing with an introspection critical, yet discriminating, the most secret affections and desires of his soul. And we find, too, that he has a theory of poetry, according to which it ought to be a veil for hidden truth; it should contain a moral meaning, which does not meet the eye.[1] And then, perhaps, we catch ourselves wondering whether the artist and the critic in Petrarch has obscured the lover, whether it is possible to regard as actual and historical anything that he sings of his love.

In my opinion, the key to the difficulty is to be found, if at all, in his prose—especially in any writing which we can be reasonably sure was written for his own eye, with no artistic preconception. This view is diametrically opposed to that of de Sanctis, who bids us ignore the musty volumes written about the man and confine ourselves entirely to his art.[2] In Petrarch's poetry there is not only frequent exaggeration, frequent allegory, frequent tendency to magnify the significance of trivial incidents; there is also a certain reserve, imposed upon him by his resolve, for his lady's sake and his own, to furnish no clue to her identity for the casual reader of these fugitive pieces. If his prose can supply us with any evidence of the duration and intensity of his passion, which is corroborated by expressions in the poems, we shall know that we are standing on solid ground. Such allusions are rare in his letters—partly because so few of his friends were taken fully into his confidence, but even more perhaps because he

[1] See his laureate address on the Capitol (analysed below in Chap. XIV.); there are other passages to the same effect in the *Secret*.

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 12.

deliberately excised such references in preparing his correspondence for publication. But his *Secret* is a document of capital importance—all the more if we accept his explicit assurance that it was not meant to be read by his contemporaries.[1]

Let us take as a first instance the note in his Virgil, quoted at the opening of the last chapter. It shows the clearest signs of having been written while his grief was fresh, in a place where he could often see it, but few others were likely to do so. It authenticates two statements in the sonnets on the dates of his "inamoration" and of his lady's death.[2] It testifies by its very reserve no less than by incidental touches to the depth of the feelings aroused by the news of his loss. It is thus a complete refutation of the view which would make "Laura" nothing but a figment, a symbol, a being as ethereal and shadowy as the "Beatrice" of the *Vita Nuova*. Take again the sole passage in the letters where "Laura" is mentioned by name, and this in answer to his correspondent's jesting disbelief in her real existence.[3] To rebut the insinuation, the poet appeals to his habitual pallor—the very circumstance which, as seen in his lady, awakes the flattering hope in a famous sonnet [4] that his love is returned. Or take the letter of April 26, 1336, written to his confessor [5]—the first admission of the sinfulness of his love—and compare it with the consciousness, which we can see growing in the *Canzoniere*, at least from the 48th Sonnet, and probably earlier, that his love was an offence against his faith and the true cause of his misery.[6] It is sometimes said that we can place no confidence in Petrarch's letters as evidence of his feelings at any particular time, because he admits that he made free alterations in them when preparing an edition for the public. Fortunately, we have at least one letter in its original state [7] and can compare it with the form—certainly

[1] *Secretum*, Præf. *ad fin.* (B. ed. p. 373). See Chap. XVI. below.

[2] For the "inamoration," S. 176 ("Voglia mi sprona"), ll. 12, 13; and for her death, S. 63, Part II. ("Tornami a mente"), ll. 12–14.

[3] *F.* II. 9 (December 21, 1336, to the Bishop of Lombez), translated below, Chap. IX. pp. 329, 330. Finzi (*Petrarca*, 1900, p. 106, n.) makes a difficulty of the fact of the Bishop's ignorance. But the latter, though a friend, was a *superior*, and in *Ep. Metr.* I. vii. (of 1338 to the same) P. is evidently making a first confession to him.

[4] S. 98 ("Quel vago impallidir").

[5] *F.* IV. 1 (to Dionisio Roberti). See Chap. IX. pp. 318–325.

[6] S. 48 ("Padre del ciel"), written in Holy Week, 1338.

[7] Frac. III. (App. VI.) 516–530 (to Luca Cristiano). The date is 1349.

much altered [1]—in which he was willing that it should appear. In that letter he alludes, as in the *Secret*, to his retirement to Vaucluse as caused by the hope that he might relieve his unhappy passion ; but he confesses (in both versions of the letter) that his " flame " was fed rather than quenched by solitude and leisure.[2] This admission is corroborated by the whole tone of the Vaucluse lyrics and especially by his metrical letter of 1338 to the Bishop of Lombez.[3]

It may be said that these are but slight indications ; but they surely point to a passion which was far from being assumed or merely " poetic." They seem to imply that there were three " phases " in the history of his love—the first covering about six years (1327–1333), before he began his wider travels, the second the next ten (1333–1343), when he strove in vain by study and by change of scene to conquer his infatuation.[4] During the first I should place the scene, so clearly hinted at in the first Canzone,[5] when the virtue of " Laura " took alarm at his ardour, and she banished him from her presence, or persistently wore a veil when compelled to meet him. Afterwards he was forgiven, but only upon the express condition that he would not renew his suit. The second phase was a period of struggle—at first futile as regards his own peace, but more successful later, as his studies became more absorbing and his fame assured. The third phase would be the last five years of her life (1343–1348), beginning with the composition of the *Secret*, by which time he had persuaded himself that his passion was " platonic," or, in the fashion of the day, the exalted love of the knight for the mistress, whose device he bore upon his literary escutcheon.

The *Secret*, however, remains the standing proof that Petrarch's passion, though not conquered, was passing from the white heat

[1] It reappears split up into the four letters to " Olympius " (*F.* VIII. 2–5). See note at the end of Chap. XXII.

[2] " In tantâ solitudine . . . desperatius urebar " (Frac. I. 429; III. 523).

[3] *Ep. Metr.* I. vii. (translated below, Chap. IX. pp. 365–368).

[4] Bartoli unfairly complains (*op. cit.* p. 275) that Mézières in his *Pétrarque* (Paris, 1868, p. 66) has no warrant for saying that P. began to struggle against his love in 1333. There is plain warrant in *F.* IV. 1 (of 1336, where P. says that he had fought against it for three years), which he had himself previously quoted (p. 215).

[5] C. I. (" Nel dolce tempo ") ll. 75–89. The passage about his forgiveness is in ll. 132–135. In a note to Vat. 3196, P. describes this Canzone as " de primis inventionibus nostris," which can only mean that it was one of his earliest poems.

of its earlier years to the tenderer and calmer feeling, which he could assure himself was blameless, nay, even praiseworthy. Taxed by St. Augustine with excessive love for a mortal woman, he begins by drawing a distinction between sensual love and the fascination of "one who is the image of virtue," and maintains that his affection is of the latter type. He launches into an extravagant description of "Laura's" graces and excellences; and when twice reminded that noble things can be loved in a shameful way, he protests that in his love—he means in the actual circumstances of it—"there has never been anything base or foul or even blameworthy, unless perhaps its intensity." [1] He says that his love is not like that of the common herd; it is one *sui generis*. When the Saint drily remarks that other people might say the same of theirs, Petrarch says that he owes to "Laura" whatever renown or virtue he may possess. "She recalled my youthful mind from all baseness—drew it, as they say, with a grappling iron—and impelled it to high things." We may suspect here an allusion to the actual method pursued by "Laura" to console him for the denial of her love. Recognizing his great abilities and the fact that his love of fame was the only serious rival to his infatuated passion, she would encourage his studies and thus try to divert his thoughts and conversation from dangerous paths.

But the Saint—whose voice, we must remember, is that of Petrarch's own conscience—declares roundly that all this talk of his debt to her is false. So far from "impelling him to high things" she has prevented him from reaching them, or rather he himself has done so, "for she indeed is innocent." Leading him backwards to the second phase of his love, Augustine recalls the misery into which it has plunged him, and says outright that this woman has been his ruin.[2] Answering the claim that his love is less for her body than her soul—in proof of which the poet appeals to his constancy in the decay of her beauty—the Saint compels him to confess that his departure from the love and service of God synchronized with the beginning of his passion. His love has been both for body and soul, and in neither has been as temperate as was fitting. Else why did not his "Laura"

[1] B. ed. p. 399. He solemnly invokes "Truth" to attest this statement. For the whole passage (here briefly analysed) see the early pages of Dial. III.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 400.

lead him upward and place his feet in the right path? Petrarch replies:

"She did this so far as she could. What else did she do, when, moved by no blandishments or entreaties, she preserved her womanly honour, and despite her youth and mine, despite a host of circumstances that would have bent a heart of adamant, remained resolute and unconquerable. Surely that feminine soul taught me what was becoming in a man, and in zeal for her chastity spared me (as Seneca says) neither her example nor her reproaches. Finally, when she saw that I had broken the reins in my headlong career, she chose flight rather than consent." [1]

The Saint then justly turns upon his penitent and asks how he dare pretend that he had had no base desires. The poet replies, that his confessor has caught him unawares and alleges his youth and passion in excuse. But this was long ago; now he has learnt to restrain his desires and buttress his tottering resolve. "She, however, always remained the same, strong in her first purpose. The more I reflect upon this lady's constancy, the more I admire it; and if I once regretted her action, I now rejoice at it and feel deeply grateful to her."

Petrarch has here been brought back against his will to the first phase of his love; he has been convicted at least of equivocation in asserting that it was untainted by sensual desire. His language can only mean that he made "Laura" a declaration of love [2] and that she was so offended at the liberty as for a time —perhaps for a considerable time—to refuse to see him. His words should be carefully compared with the first Canzone, which, although replete with allegory,[3] refers, I am persuaded, to the same occasion. The reply of "Laura"—"Perchance I am not what you deem" [4]—may well have been the very expression she used, when she could no longer doubt his meaning. Sismondi goes so far as to doubt whether Petrarch and "Laura" ever met without witnesses,[5] but these two passages, taken together, tell

[1] B. ed. p. 402.

[2] Cf. with this, "Anzi le dissi 'l ver, pien di paura," C. I. l. 77.

[3] The scene in which P. surprises "Laura" bathing (ll. 148–160), which so many writers have taken as real, is, I feel sure, wholly allegorical —suggested by the fable of Artemis and Actæon. P. is the daring hunter whose unrestrained passion is punished by laceration by his own hounds —the torment of his unsatisfied desires.

[4] L. 83, "I' non son forse chi tu credi."

[5] *Literature of the South of Europe* (Bohn), I. 282.

a different story. Had the Canzone been the only proof, we might have hesitated; but this is a crucial instance of the way in which his prose elucidates his poetry. A very acute critic [1] thinks that the poet's habitual exaggeration is discernible even in the above-quoted passage of the *Secret*. But a careful reader of the whole argument must conclude that Petrarch, with an eye to dramatic effect, wants to represent his love as merely platonic, but feigns himself entrapped by the Saint into a confession of the contrary, which was the truth. He expressly refers this fault to his youth and early years; and we may assume that much of his later misery was due not merely to the voice of conscience—so often called his "mysticism"—but to a certainty of the hopelessness of his passion. It must be allowed that there are other traces of the first phase in the *Canzoniere* and that they are not confined to his earlier pieces.[2] They are not frequent,[3] and never offensively expressed; for Petrarch, though, by his own confession, anything but an anchorite,[4] evidently intended his poems to be a reflection of the purity of his lady. To her influence over him in this respect he clearly alludes in his words that she "impelled him to high things"; and he repeats the claim in a fine Canzone,[5] which is one of his masterpieces:

> "Lady, in your bright eyes
> Soft glancing round, I mark a holy light
> Pointing the arduous way that heavenward lies.
> * * * *
> This is the beacon guide to deeds of worth
> And urges me to seek the glorious goal" (LADY DACRE, 1820).

Still, it is plain that some poems were never meant for her eye, and must have been jealously locked in his desk till after her death. Sismondi can hardly have read these when he wrote: "Of all the erotic poets, Petrarch alone never expresses a single hope offensive to the purity which had been pledged to another."[6] The Saint in the *Secret* refers definitely to the *Canzoniere* only

[1] Finzi (*op. cit.*), p. 97.

[2] The chief passages are Sestina I. ("A qualunque animale"), ll. 31–36; S. 58 ("Quando giunse a Simon"); ll. 12–14 (the first an early poem and the second about 1340); and Sestina VII. ("Non ha tanti"), ll. 31–36 (dated by Mestica about 1346—see his *Bacio di Madonna Laura*, in *Nuova Antologia*, t. CXXII. pp. 496–517).

[3] Cochin (p. 11) speaks of "cent passages," which is exaggerated.

[4] See especially, *Ep. Post.* and *F.* X. 5 (to Gherardo).

[5] C. IX. ("Gentil mia donna"), ll. 1–6.

[6] *Op. cit.* p. 281.

once [1]; had he explored their recesses, he could have at once convinced the poet out of his own mouth that his love was not entirely platonic.

There can thus be no question that Petrarch's love, at least in its early stages, was desperately real. But was it always so? Was it the all-absorbing passion that, in the *Canzoniere*, it seems to be? In a letter written soon after her death [2] he says that before that event his "flame had been checked by reflection and tempered by time." The words seem peculiarly appropriate to the second and third phases above described. We shall see in the sequel that his life—more than that of most poets—was engrossed by a multitude of other interests which should have helped to make him forget it. He was a scholar of vast erudition, with a knowledge of the Latin classics at that time unrivalled. He was a fervent patriot, often immersed in the maze of current politics, eager to seize every chance of serving his beloved Italy. He had an immense circle of friends, each of whom expected to be gratified with occasional epistles in elegant Latin. This variety of his interests has even been put forward [3] as an objection to the sincerity of his attachment; as if a man, with "so many irons in the fire," could not have been the dejected, lovelorn swain of his lyrics. The objection too much ignores the facts that his love was hopeless and that *he knew it to be so*, and also that, in his later years, it offended his sense of right. But why, then, did he not accept his disappointment and manfully turn his back upon it? That is the advice which he puts into the Saint's mouth in the *Secret*, but he never had the courage really to take it. We may look for the reason partly in the nature of the man, partly in the poetic fashions of the age of chivalry. With all his multifarious activities, which were really his salvation, he was given to day-dreams, and his love became a mental obsession. It seemed to him treason to one who was

"Sole of her sex in my impassioned mind," [4] (DACRE).

[1] B. ed. p. 399. "Quasi mortuæ amicæ fumereum carmen . . . cecinisti." The allusion is probably to S. 213 ("O misera ed orribile visione"), or to another of the six sonnets of that sequence (211–216). This may be a subsequent insertion, since that sonnet is a late one (? 1347), and may even (as Cochin thinks, p. 115) have been written after her death. There is a general reference to the "laurel sonnets" on p. 403 (B. ed.).

[2] *F.* IX. 4 (quoted above, Chap. VII. pp. 233, 234).

[3] Cf. Finzi, p. 104; Bartoli, p. 225.

[4] "Colei, che sola a me par donna" (C. XIV. 3).

not to be continually singing her praises and—one may add in an "aside"—not to increase the volume of tributes which were universally admired and "well known to the vulgar." [1] It was useless to try and arouse his pride by reminding himself that, while he had been "solicitous for her name," [2] "Laura" had always treated him with disdain, had constantly despised and neglected him.[3] He knew that he could not expect anything else from a woman of virtue; and he was resolved that her virtue, which had once been his torment, should now become the special theme of his praise. His love should henceforth be purged of its earthly dross and become "the noblest action of his soul." [4] That is, he tried to "platonize," to spiritualize it, and when he wrote the *Secret*, was persuading himself that he had done so. His love was to be something unique, without a peer through the world.[5] He had never loved—could never possibly love—any one else; it was her presence, her mere vicinity, which alone made life sweet.[6]

These expressions are all taken from the *Secret*, and the *Canzoniere* abounds in passages of a similar type. There was no novelty in the idea; it was familiar to that age of chivalry, and Italian poetry was full of it. Theologians had adopted it from Plato through the Latin fathers and defended it from the pulpit.[7] It had been popularized by the establishment of "Courts of Love," in which the most virtuous ladies presided, and which had received the encouragement of Popes. In these assemblies it had been decided that love and marriage were mutually inconsistent [8]; the true, sublime love could never exist where there were material bonds. The love of Dante for Beatrice was of this kind; its object seems rather an angel than a human being. The questions, however, must be asked—Was such a love possible,

[1] "Vulgo etiam nota" (B. ed. p. 403).
[2] "De illius nomine sollicitus," p. 410.
[3] "Illius altum sæpe ingratumque supercilium," p. 409.
[4] "Animi nobilissimam actionem," p. 397.
[5] "In me singularia quædam sunt," p. 399.
[6] "Quæ dulcem mibi vitam solâ sui præsertiâ faciebat," p. 399. See also p. 402.
[7] Foscolo, *Essays on Petrarch* (1823), pp. 6, 7. He mentions especially Giovanni da Fabriano, who died in 1348, and also a sermon by a Dominican friar in 1372 (when P. was still living) on the spirituality of his love for "Laura."
[8] Such was the doctrine of the Countess de Champagne, daughter of Louis VII., in the twelfth century (*ibid.* p. 9).

when it had been preceded by one of another sort? Did not its very theory presume it to be mutual? And, finally, did Petrarch actually succeed in so sublimating his love for "Laura"? As to the first point, the lady might be inclined to murmur, as the Saint did after extorting his penitent's full confession, "It is not easy to credit a man who has once taken you in." [1] Petrarch expresses his deep gratitude to her for resisting his first transports; but was there not still something that he required of her? The Saint shows an intimate knowledge of the human heart in insisting that Love hungers, above all, for a confession of its return [2]; and that hunger is patent enough in the poet's rhapsodies to the very last. He might profess that he would be content with the mere avowal; but after her first experience the lady might be justly sceptical of his sincerity.

There has been much fruitless speculation as to "Laura's" real feelings towards him. Certain French writers,[3] with a fondness for scandal, express an open disbelief in her virtue, despite the most explicit statements of her lover. Others, as de Sade and Mézières, think that he had won her heart, but that she was too virtuous ever to admit it. Others, as Foscolo,[4] suppose that she did not love the man, but was gratified at the poetic incense he offered to her charms. Perhaps the last suggestion may be nearest the truth; but we must remember that such evidence as we have is prejudiced—it comes only from one side. The poet falls into such raptures at the least sign of her relenting that she must have been chary of giving him any opening. If her husband, as seems likely, were jealous of his admiration, she would have the more need for circumspection. The customs of the time permitted a freedom in this respect which we can hardly understand; nor can we estimate the social difficulties of the case without knowing —as we cannot know—how far the identity of the lady was an "open secret." There is a late sonnet [5] in Part I. of the *Canzoniere* in which the poet celebrates a kiss given to "Laura" by a royal personage at a public fête; the last line expresses a fervent wish that he had been "in the prince's shoes." [6] The older

[1] "Semel fallenti non facile rursus fides habenda est." B. ed. p. 402.
[2] *Ibid.*
[3] As the Abbé Delille and Madame Deshoulières.
[4] *Op. cit.* p. 39.
[5] S. 201 ("Real natura, angelico intelletto").
[6] Finzi (*Petrarca*, p. 102, n.) strangely says there is no proof that

commentators identify the royal gallant with Robert of Naples (which is impossible [1]), or with some Count of Anjou; but if the more modern opinion be correct, that it was Charles of Luxemburg [2] during his visit to Avignon in the spring of 1346, the motive of the kiss, which would be contrary to Italian custom,[3] becomes rather problematical. "Laura" would then have been approaching forty years of age, and by her lover's own confession her beauty, as is usual with southern "blondes," had suffered early decay. If the kiss were merely a tribute to the charms which had inspired Petrarch's lyrics—though he does not say this [4]—the secret must have been well known to a limited circle. We may assume, however, that though he was generally known to be the author of these anonymous poems, the public had no idea that this adoration was anything but "poetic." The secret of the lady's identity and of the seriousness of his passion was, it is plain, most jealously guarded [5]; and the statement twice made in the *Secret* that he was the laughing-stock—the "talk"—of the public [6] shows that he sedulously fed this popular delusion. One of his admirers in Italy, Guido Gonzaga,[7] felt curiosity only as to the poet's personality; that of the lady would not cost him a thought. The good folk of Avignon, if more inquisitive, would have little to guide them; for even the poems, which magnify the most trivial incidents, supply no evidence of frequent intercourse between the lovers.

The Abbé de Sade's method of treating the lyrics tends to create a different, and wholly false, impression. He tries to brighten his pages by giving dates to some of the love-poems—entirely out of his own head—and then weaving romances about them, which are just as baseless. He would regard them as an

"Laura" was the favoured dame, but surely ll. 8 and 14 leave this beyond doubt.

[1] King Robert was never in Provence after 1324.

[2] De Sade (t. II. Note xviii. pp. 37–44) was the originator of this hypothesis. L. Peruzzi (see above, p. 242, note 2) says it was Queen Joan, who only came when "Laura" was dead.

[3] So says Soave (*Rime di F. P.*, Milan, 1805), I. p. 265.

[4] In a letter of 1355 (*F.* XIX. 4, Frac. II. 525), P. expressly tells the Emperor Charles that though he saw him during this visit to Avignon, he did not then know him personally.

[5] Augustine tells P. to conquer his passion, if only to spare his friends the shame of telling lies ("ut amici liberentur ab infamiâ mentiendi," B. ed. p. 409).

[6] "Vulgi fabula" (*ibid.*).

[7] See *F.* III. 11, quoted in Chap. XIII.

historical document of a value nearly equal to the prose letters in Latin. Professor Bartoli has exposed the folly of this method,[1] and it is needless to recapitulate his merciless criticism. We are told, for instance, that "Laura" reproved the poet for not visiting her; but the sonnet quoted [2] supplies no evidence for the statement. Four sonnets are on the subject of "Laura" weeping; and de Sade is sure it was for the death of her mother![3] It is all part of an attempt to create the picture of an historical "Laura," for which no materials whatever exist. A critic of the opposite school [4] is continually repeating that "Laura" is no real woman, but "a goddess." The view has, of course, a modicum of truth, for—poets apart—what man does not idealize the object of his devotion? But, if it means that she has none of the lineaments of earth, it is as false as the rival notion that she was a heartless prude, vain of her conquest and of her own charms, and destitute of moral beauty.[5] The "Laura" of the poems is a reflection of the poet's own spirit; as has been truly said, "apart from him she disappears. She is neither always a goddess, nor always a woman, but first one and then the other"; "she is a goddess, when he is an angel; she becomes a woman, when he returns to his humanity." [6] In the latter capacity he is afraid of her; he often reproaches her for her cruelty, but secretly blesses her for it, for he suspects his love to be a mortal sin.[7] Yet the evident humanity of his affection is the secret of his poetic success; and the strange thing is that this humanity does not desert him, but is intensified in the poems composed after her death. De Sanctis styles those poems "The Transfiguration of Laura" [8]; but, with a flash of critical intuition, Bartoli substitutes the phrase, "The Transfiguration of Petrarch." [9]

[1] Pp. 262–274.
[2] S. 31 ("Io temo si de' begli occhi").
[3] T. II. p. 259, on SS. 122–125.
[4] De Sanctis in his *Saggio critico sul P.*
[5] Cf. B. Zendrini (*P. e Laura*, Milan, 1875), p. 80.
[6] Bartoli (*op. cit.*), 260, 261, and 276.
[7] As a proof that his love was never of the transcendental type, we have his own admission, both in a sonnet and in a letter, that it was less ardent during the decay of her beauty in her later years. Cf. S. 47 (Part II.), 1, 2, "E intepidir sentia gia 'l foco," with the phrase in *F.* IX. 4 (Frac. II. 14), "Veteris flammæ, si quid favilla tepentis superfuerat, cogitatio oppressit, tempus lenivit." Neither passage, however, was written till after her death.
[8] Chap. IX. *in op. cit.*
[9] *Op. cit.* p. 276.

Now at length, he thought, his love could be really spiritualized; there could be no sin in loving a being of another world. He lays aside his fear of her; he feigns interviews with her beatified spirit, in which they could converse together, with a freedom denied to them on earth. The lady, too, undergoes a change; but it is merely a reflection of the change in his own spirit. She now becomes the sister, the friend to whom he confides all his troubles; she has ceased to be an enigma, whose heart he cannot read—who, in his alternate moods, inspires infinite rapture or causes intense torment; she appears at once "fairer and less proud"; she is more womanly,[1] and reveals a fondness for him which he never dared ascribe to her when living. The 34th Sonnet of Part II. is the best witness to this final mood of the poet:

"Thither my ecstatic thought had rapt me where
She dwells, whom still on earth I seek in vain;
And there, with those whom the third heavens contain,
I see her, much more kind and much more fair.
My hand she took, and said: 'Within this sphere,
If hope deceive me not, thou shalt again
With me reside; who caused thy mortal pain
Am I, and even in summer closed my year.
My bliss no human thought can understand;
Thee only I await, and that erewhile
You held so dear—the veil I left behind.'
She ceased; Ah why? why did she loose my hand?
For oh! her hallowed words, her roseate smile
In heaven had well nigh fixed my ravished mind." [2]

What matter that these were but the fond fancies of his heart? His old misery had been the eternal conflict between his love for "Laura" and his duty to God; now he can think of the two together, and look forward to the day

"When from this black night my saved spirit flies
Soaring up, up above the bright serene,
Where with my Lord my lady shall be seen." [3]

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[1] J. Owen (*Skeptics of the Italian Renaissance*, pp. 125, 228, 229) considers that the "Laura" of the Second Part is a symbol of unattained desire or unrealized aspiration. Why "unattained desire" should need a "symbol" he does not explain. If P.'s love for her was ever a noble aspiration, he regarded it as realized when she was in bliss, as it never could have been while she was on earth.

[2] S. 34, Part II. ("Levonmi"). The translation is by James, 1st Earl of Charlemont, in the posthumous edition of *Select Sonnets from P.* (Dublin, 1822).

[3] "E da si folte tenebre mi parta
Volando tanto sù nel bel sereno,
Ch' i' veggia il mio Signore e la mia donna."
S. 78, Part II. ("E mi par d'or"); ll. 12–14 (Macgregor).

In the *Trionfi*, written long after his last farewell to the land of his exile and his pain, he is bolder still. He imagines that on the night of "Laura's" departure from earth she appeared to him in vision and, while bidding him look forward to their eternal reunion, made the confession that his soul had so long hungered to hear:

"Since in your bosom first its birth I saw,
One fire our heart has equally inflamed,
Except that I concealed it, you proclaimed;
And louder as your cry for mercy swelled,
Terror and shame my silence more compelled;
* * * *
But surely then at least the veil was raised,
You only present when your verse I praised.
And whispering sang 'Love dares not more to say'—
—Yours was my heart, though turned my eyes away." [1]

Such was the "flattering unction" he laid to his wounded soul through the power of his imagination—sole comfort to a poet involved in a hapless and misplaced passion.

We conclude, then, that with all his efforts Petrarch never really succeeded in spiritualizing his love for "Laura." It was too human and personal for that; but the personality was his own, not hers. There is truth in the saying of Symonds that she is ever "a Burne-Jones woman, incarnating a mood of feeling rather than a distinct personality." [2] But, in my opinion, this is not because she is "always ideal—*i.e.* woman in general personified by the poet"—but because what the same writer calls Petrarch's "dominant subjectivity" denied him the power of depicting her as she was, in the actual lineaments of her body and soul. His whole nature rebelled against the mystic transcendentalism of Guinicelli and the Tuscan school. His love must be human or nothing; but again, the humanity is his, not hers. And so to the end his affection was too much centred in self to become a passion of the loftiest type. No doubt it became purer with the lapse of time and with the growing certainty of its hopelessness; and after her death he could speak of it as "quenched,"[3] because the sense of perpetual conflict with temptation had disappeared. But in truth it then became a "cult"—the worship of a

[1] *Tri. della M.* (Mestica) II. 139–151 (Macgregor's translation). The lady is inconsistent; for she here lets out the secret which eleven lines before (l. 128) she had said she should keep to herself.

[2] *Renaissance in Italy*, Vol. IV. (Italian literature), p. 95.

[3] *F.* IX. 4, "Mors exstinxit."

beatified saint; yet the saint is still very human, for she is merely a projection of the poet's personality, simply a "medium" for expressing his own moods and feelings. In a letter written four years after the fatal day he says, almost in a tone of triumph, "Loosed are the chains with which I was once bound, closed are the eyes which I once desired to please; and, if they were open, I think they would not exercise their wonted empire over me."[1] If this were really so, why should he be always raking up memories of the past? Why devote so much of the leisure of his old age to polishing and retouching the lyrics of his youth? Above all, why employ his later years in a new Italian poem,[2] which was to be the apotheosis of her glory—and of his? The answer, I think, is twofold—the one resting on the poet's own temperament; the other on his art. In her lifetime he was tormented by the discord between his passion and his faith, his humanity and his asceticism. This discord, expounded in the *Secret*, is well described in an old Greek proverb, quoted by Symonds[3]—"To desire the impossible is a malady of the soul." Despite all Petrarch's complaints and lamentings, he deliberately fostered this malady through all his years of struggle; he really gloried in the self-revelation which laid bare his quivering wounds to the world.[4] And when the cause was removed, the obsession was not destroyed, but changed; he took refuge in indulging the luxury of grief. As his love had originally been real, so also was his sorrow—at first; yet he had the poet's power of enwrapping himself in old sentiments and reproducing them in all their pristine intensity. Here, it will be said, we are in the domain of art, but not art to the exclusion of nature—rather art as "second nature." His combination of real feeling with artistic power makes him a love-poet for all time. If he felt a secret satisfaction at his own misery, it was partly because he knew that the recital of his hapless love would awaken a responsive chord in the hearts of men.

We must, therefore, admit the presence of an artistic motive

[1] *F.* XIII. 8 (to Nelli, Frac. II. 251)—undated, but apparently of 1352.

[2] The *Trionfi*.

[3] *Loc. cit.* p. 71.

[4] Many passages might be cited in proof of this. I need only refer to S. 68 ("Fuggendo la prigione"), ll. 10, 11; and C. IV. ("Si è debile"), l. 69.

in both Parts of the *Canzoniere;* and, in my judgment, the admission carries no imputation of insincerity. He inherited a tradition which imposed upon the poet an unbounded devotion, expressed often in artificial and exaggerated terms, to the beauty and virtue of his lady. Let us grant that he "has grafted the personal motive of his love for 'Laura' upon the artistic conception" of the passion once current in Troubadour Land.[1] This is merely to say that he adopted the lyrical fashion of his day; it would be going too far to add that his love was merely of the Troubadour type.[2] Rather, he vastly enriched their conception of it by a touch of humanity, which is all his own. It seems to me false criticism to admire his "flawless polish," his supreme perfection of form, and yet so far to miss this note of reality as to complain of his monotony and "lack of natural charm."[3] The monotony is perhaps inseparable from the subject; the natural charm is as conspicuous in the best of his lyrics as it is undeniably absent from others. Symonds explains the secret of his pre-eminence in the following passage, as true as it is eloquent:

"If his dominant subjectivity weakened his grasp upon external things, it made him supreme in self-portraiture. Every mood of passion is caught and fixed precisely in his verse. The most evanescent shades of feeling are firmly set upon the exquisite picture. Each string of Love's many-chorded lyre is touched with vigorous hand. The fluctuations of hope, despair, surprise; the 'yea and nay twinned in a single breath'; the struggle of conflicting aspirations in a soul drawn now to God and now to earth; the quiet resting-places of content; the recrudescence of the ancient smart; the peace of absence, when longing is luxury; the agony of presence adding fire to fire—all this is rendered with a force so striking, in a style so monumental, that the *Canzoniere* may still be called the Introduction to the Book of Love."[4]

M. Cochin, one of the chief "Petrarchists" of our day, thinks that he detects signs of a general plan, which gives a moral unity to this collection of lyrics. He calls it "the story of a single love, at first impure, then purified by the very virtue of 'Laura,' and rising gradually, step by step, to a love supra-material, to

[1] Finzi (*op. cit.*), p. 103.
[2] Sismondi rather implies than expresses this view in *Hist. des Républ. Ital.* IV. p. 147.
[3] F. J. Snell, *The Fourteenth Century*, pp. 152, 153.
[4] *Op. cit.* pp. 96; 97.

the love of God." [1] The idea is peculiarly attractive, for it exactly fits Petrarch's theory of poetry in general as a vehicle of moral teaching. Presumably, it is not implied that he composed his poems with this ethical end in view, but that it influenced him when he made his definitive copy towards the close of his life and arranged them in their present order. If this theory be true, we should expect to find, (1) that at any rate the love-poetry would be disposed in an order of time, if not absolute, at least general and relative to the purpose in view,[2] (2) that the three separate "phases" of his love would be distinguishable and the lyrics belonging to them grouped in their proper order, and (3) that no pieces would be admitted, which owed their origin to another attachment of a more transient kind. Let us consider these points a little more fully.

(1) It is, of course, admitted that the vast majority of the lyrics contain no indication of date; but M. Cochin has demonstrated that the "anniversary" pieces—those written on or about April 6—to which a date can be assigned, appear in the order of their composition, and that others, which can be dated approximately, preserve the same order. Yet he admits that Petrarch had in view an arrangement more logical than chronological, and that the chronology is rather of sentiments than of events. The poet, however, while grouping together at the end of the definitive copy all the pieces indisputably composed after "Laura's" death, has adopted a division—marked only by seven blank pages—which includes in the Second Part three pieces written, at least professedly, during her life. It has been suggested that these pages may have been left blank for the insertion of earlier poems, which might afterwards have been thought worthy of a place in the collection.[3] The Italian critic, Signor Cesareo, who has adopted a theory—similar, but with some differences—of the moral unity of the *Canzoniere*, supposes rather that the division corresponds, not with the lady's death, but with the final conversion of the poet to a more spiritual love.[4] Thus,

[1] *La Chronologie du Canzoniere de P.* p. 24.

[2] This is M. Cochin's principle (p. 2). He justly considers it impossible to arrive at an absolute chronology, such as was attempted by A. Pakscher (*Die Chronologie der Gedichter P.'s*, Berlin, 1887).

[3] Apparently this is the only distinction in the MS. between Part I. and Part II.

[4] In his essay on the *Canzoniere* in *Nuova Antologia*, Ser. III. t. CXL. (June, 1895).

he takes Part I. as representing the first two phases of the passion (indistinguishable in the order of the poems) and Part II. as expressive of the third phase and of the mourning of the poet for his lost lady.

(2) M. Cochin, on the contrary, thinks that the first eleven sonnets (omitting the introductory) and one ballad represent the first " phase," and that the second ballad begins the second—the period of separation (through travel) and of conflict, which he terminates with the 56th Sonnet. After that point he thinks the general tendency of the poems is towards an ideal love. I must confess that these divisions of Part I. appear to me not merely conjectural, but imaginary; and, so far, I should side with Signor Cesareo. No doubt the " lyrics of sadness " become more frequent towards the end of Part I.; but they are interspersed with others in a different key, in which the " unregenerate love " reappears. Such are undoubtedly the sonnets on the Memmi picture (57 and 58), with which M. Cochin begins the last section of Part I. Moreover, if it had been the poet's main aim to record any such " upward tendency " in Part I., it would surely have been an artistic mistake to insert in it some thirty pieces which have nothing whatever to do with his " one great passion." Beyond question Petrarch wished to draw a sharp distinction between the " earthly " and the " ideal " phases of his love; but I believe that such contrast is only discernible between the two main divisions of his collection.

(3) No subject in connexion with the *Canzoniere* has been discussed with more acrimony in Italy than the question whether any of the poems were written to celebrate other ladies than "Laura." [1] It is plain that, if this be indeed the case, the theory of M. Cochin, as he perceives, must become untenable. Yet, curiously enough, Signor Cesareo, who also sees a psychological (if not a moral) amity in the *Canzoniere*,[2] is himself the critic who finds most traces of these " vagrant loves." Such a discovery does not disturb him; for these poems may be held to have crept

[1] For the affirmative see G. A. Cesareo, *Le Poesie Volgari del P.* (in *Nuova Antologia*, see note 4, p. 273), subsequently revised and reprinted at Rocca S. Casciano (1898). The work was favourably reviewed by A. Moschetti, less favourably by F. Pellegrini (in *Giorn. Stor.* t. XXXVIII.), who takes a less advanced view. It was vigorously opposed by E. Sicardi in his *Gli amori estravaganti e molteplici di F. P.*, etc. (Milan, 1900), and by L. Mascetta-Caracci in his *Gli amori del P.* (Trani, 1896).

[2] Especially in his *Nuova critica del P.* (*Nuova Ant.* t. CLII. 1897).

in by inadvertence, or Petrarch may have purposely made them cryptic in order to conceal their original purpose. Certainly most of the allusions are so cryptic that the poet's defenders can safely deny them *in toto*. By a process of exclusion, M. Cochin reduces the number of such poems to six, and finally to two, or (at the most) three [1]; but even a single incontrovertible exception in the definitive copy would throw some doubt on his theory. In the third sonnet of Part II.[2] the poet dimly alludes to a second attachment, which threatened to ensnare him after "Laura's" death. He implies, says M. Cochin, that he resisted it and that the thought of "Laura" saved him; but Petrarch adds, rather inconsistently, that "the tie was broken and the fire quenched" by the second lady's death. The mysterious allusion has been connected with an "entanglement" which he is said to have experienced at Ferrara during his visit there in 1349.[3] But the only evidence for this incident is a sonnet addressed to Antonio de' Beccari of that city,[4] which is not found in the *Canzoniere* and is possibly not authentic. There are, however, some indications that Petrarch did deliberately exclude from the *Canzoniere* poems which referred to another attachment. A sonnet [5] in his first autograph draft, which does not appear in the definitive copy,[6] is of this character; and possibly for the same reason he erased from the latter a Ballata [7] which his amanuensis had included, and put his fourth Madrigal in its place. But why, if he rejected two or three poems for this reason, should he insert another of the same kind, unless he were actuated by some different motive? M. Cochin thinks it enough if he can prove Petrarch to have had but one "poetic" mistress,[8]

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 27. The six are Madr. II., Ball. III., SS. 53, 56, 150 and 226. Of these, after closer examination, he will only admit SS. 53 and 226; but he apparently forgets here S. 3 of Part II., which elsewhere he regards as a "grave" difficulty.

[2] S. 3 (Part II.), "L'ardente nodo."

[3] Fracassetti's date of 1348 for this visit is demonstrably a mistake. See Chap. XXII. below.

[4] See Solerti (*op. cit. infra*, p. 284, note 3). It is No. XXII. of that work ("Antonio, cosa ha fatto"). There is, however, good MS. authority for this sonnet, and it appears in the "Giunta" of many editions.

[5] This is No. XXIII. in Solerti ("Quella che'l giovenil"), said by P. in a note to have been addressed to Jacopo da Imola. See Mestica, pp. 394–395.

[6] In this chapter the "draft" is the Vat. No. 3196, the definitive copy No. 3195. See p. 256, note 1.

[7] This Ballata is No. I. in Solerti ("Donna, mi vene").

[8] *Op. cit.*, p. 10.

and he instances Dante's confession in the *Vita Nuova* [1] of a momentary infidelity of thought, from which he was saved by the memory of his dead lady. Petrarch may have had this precedent in mind when he admitted the third sonnet into Part II.; yet, at the opening of the section devoted to his "more spiritual" love, it undoubtedly strikes a jarring note. But one must deprecate the "mud" stirred up so freely on this matter by allusions to his erotic temperament. His frailties in that respect, which he has elsewhere [2] frankly recorded, have left little or no impress upon his lyrical poems. If, like Horace, he had his yielding "Lydia," he kept her out of his verse; we find there no procession of "Pyrrhas, Glyceras, Chloes, Lydes and Lyces," to whom Horace pays homage with so volatile an impartiality. Petrarch's passion for "Laura," however reprehensible, was wholly serious; and when he arranged the authorized collection of his lyrics he intended it to be a reflection of the chastity of his lady. So much is plain from the exquisite Invocation of the Virgin [3] with which it closes, and which is meant to be, as it were, the *envoi* of the impassioned lyrics preceding:

> "Medusa and my sin have made me be
> Stone whence vain drops distil;
> Virgin, do thou fulfil
> With holy tears my heart that cries to thee
> That so at least my last lament may rise—
> Earth's stain without
> And all devout—unlike my former cries." [4]

By "Medusa" he means "Laura" regarded merely as an earthly beauty; this it was which turned his heart to stone and caused his real contrition to be so long delayed.

The final place which he reserved for this charming poem—suggested, we may be sure, by a re-reading of Dante's *Paradiso*—can leave no doubt that there is a moral unity in the *Canzoniere* taken as a whole, though it is not easily recognized except in the gradual advance from the earthly love of Part I. ("Laura in Life") to the spiritual love of Part II. ("Laura in Death"). But that unity was an afterthought in old age, when his passions had been stilled, when his outward life was so strictly ordered that

[1] *Vita Nuova*, §§ 36–40.
[2] In *Ep. Post.*, in the *Secret*, and in *F.* X. 5 (to Gherardo).
[3] C. XXIX. ("Vergine bella").
[4] The translation is by Mrs. Jerrold (p. 267). Miss Agnes Tobin in her *On the Death of Madonna Laura* (1906), has given a poetic rendering of this Canzone, but it is altogether too free for illustrative quotation.

his clerical friend of those days could call him "Parthenias" [1]—the title bestowed on Virgil for his singular chastity.[2] From another point of view it is equally true to call the *Canzoniere* a random collection of fugitive pieces—"born, as it were unconsciously, from the hands of the poet." [3] I have passed them in review at this early stage in his career because they were mainly the production of his youth and laid a firm foundation for his world-wide fame. As separate poems, they were circulated in Provence and Italy, and handed on to an ever-increasing company of admirers. Doubtless they suffered in the process, even more than modern authors have suffered, since the advent of printing, from pirated or unauthorized editions of their works. Petrarch was continually adding to them, and though, with little prescience, he rested his claim to renown entirely on his Latin works, he could not be indifferent to the fate of these first-fruits of his poetic gift. Therefore in later life—probably at Milan between 1355 and 1360—he set to work to form an authorized collection, containing his latest improvements and disposed in an order which he wished to be considered final.

It would be an error to take the half-contemptuous allusions to them in his Latin letters as his deliberate estimate of their real worth. He speaks of them as "Vulgaria" [4] and "Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta" [5]; and though in his mouth "vulgar" means simply "vernacular," there is an implied depreciation of them by contrast with Latin poems. In more than six hundred letters now extant he mentions them only eight times [6]—usually with some disparaging remark. In 1349 he tells an intimate friend [7] that he feels shame and repentance for having written them. Yet he proceeded to write many more, and even spent

[1] See *Un Ami de P.; Lettres de Francesco Nelli à P.*, by H. Cochin (Paris, 1892). The passage is in Letter IV. p. 173.

[2] "Parthenias" is the name given by P. to his first Eclogue where he speaks of Virgil under that name, following the life of the poet by Servius (see *F.* X. 4; Frac. II. 89). Servius says he was so called because he was "verecundissimus" and "omni vitâ probatus" (*Vitæ Vergilianæ*, ed. L. Brumner, Leipzig, 1912, p. 68).

[3] G. B. Grassi-Privitera (*op. cit.*), p. 34.

[4] In *Sen.* V. 3 (to Boccaccio)—written about 1366.

[5] This is the title of the Vatican MS. 3195—the "definitive copy."

[6] In the Preface (to Socrates); *Ep. Metr.* I. 1; *F.* VII. 18, VIII. 3, X. 3, XXI. 15; *Sen.* V. 3, and XIII. 10 (which is a revised version of Fracassetti's *Var.* 9).

[7] *F.* VIII. 3, to Luca Cristiano ("Olympius").

much trouble in polishing and improving the "little trifles" [1] already composed. In 1373, within twenty months of his death, he wrote to his noble friend Pandolfo da Malatesta, who had begged for a copy, that they are unworthy of his sight and judgment, but as he can deny him nothing, he sends them to occupy an obscure niche in his library.

"My youth may excuse the rudeness of the style; for most of what you will read I wrote in early manhood. Now I look at them unwillingly as boyish follies in the vernacular ["vulgari juveniles ineptias"], which I could wish were unknown to everybody and to myself too, if such a thing could be. For though they show some ability for that time of life, yet the subject-matter hardly befits the gravity of age. But what can I do? They are all before the public, and are read more eagerly than what I wrote later in my years of maturity." [2]

In this depreciatory strain there is doubtless some affectation; but we must remember that, in his old age, Petrarch stood on a pedestal as the supreme champion of the graver study of classical literature. He then occupied much the same position on the continent as Dr. Johnson enjoyed in England during the latter years of his life.[3] If we could fancy the burly Doctor, remarkable alike for his dignity and his bluntness, to have produced in early life some sentimental poems on the charms of his "Betty," we may be sure that he would have ignored them as far as possible, and if forced to speak of them, would have adopted a tone of apology. But we can scarcely imagine him secretly revising such poems and writing others throughout his literary dictatorship. He would have put them away as childish things, and would have regarded that chapter of his life as closed. Such a course was not possible for a man of another temperament, who knew that his fame with the unlearned depended wholly on these

[1] "Nugellæ" in *Sen.* XIII. 10 (also in *Var.* 9). He calls them "nugæ" in *Ep. Metr.* I. 1 (to Barbato), and also in a Latin note to his draft of C. I.

[2] I translate from *Sen.* XIII. 10, of which we have another (and plainly earlier) version in *Var.* 9 (Frac.). The discovery of the latter is an interesting proof that P. revised his letters to the end of his life.

[3] In a letter to Wilkes of March 16, 1759, Smollett entitles Johnson "the great Cham of literature" ("Cham" = Khan, *i.e.* Oriental monarch, cf. *Roderick Random*, Chap. LVI.). See Boswell's *Life* (Nimmo), pp. 98, 99. Boswell's misreading of this as "Chum" in his first edition and his naïve apology is one of the funniest things in the book.

pieces. For, on one crucial point, the supposed case furnishes no parallel. Account must be taken of the despotism of Latin—employed at that time in all religious services (except sermons to the populace) and regarded as the necessary medium for all kinds of serious composition. We can as easily conceive of Johnson composing in the Staffordshire dialect a poem that claimed to be "literature," as of Petrarch writing a serious work in Italian prose. It would have seemed altogether beneath his dignity [1]; and when he wrote love-poetry in the language of the people, he felt that it required an apology. Even Dante, who disregarded convention so far as to write his great poem in Italian, felt obliged to compose his treatise [2] on the progress and rules of vernacular lyric in the language of learning. To Petrarch the employment of his time on the vernacular was like tasting the "sweet stolen waters" of the Hebrew sage.[3] To the apologetic missive, quoted above in its revised form, he added the following postscript (in the original letter only):

"I have still many of my vernacular poems on old scraps of paper, so corroded by age that I can hardly read them. From these it is my habit, whenever I get a day of leisure, to make extracts as a sort of relaxation from my labours. But this happens very seldom, and so I have given directions that a blank space should be left at the end of both Parts; and if anything turns up, I will send you a fresh copy." [4]

Here we have the only reference in the Latin letters to the revision of the *Rime*,[5] on which he was occupied for so many years; he represents it as a mere refreshment from his ordinary work which he was rarely able to enjoy. After selecting a poem he would insert it in his autograph draft, making corrections as he did so and adding the date (and perhaps some critical remark) —no doubt from inveterate habit—in Latin. The "blank spaces" referred to are not in this draft, but in what I have called "the definitive copy," which was prepared under his close

[1] Dr. Saintsbury (*The Earlier Renaissance*, p. 411) speaks of Latin writing as "a kind of Helotry." Fashion has brought the wheel round full circle, for that is exactly how P. regarded writing in the vernacular.

[2] The *De Vulgari Eloquentia*.

[3] Proverbs ix. 17.

[4] *Var.* 9 (Frac. III. 323).

[5] He hints at it in S. 25 (Part II.), where he says that if he had known his *Rime* would be so popular, he would have made them better; but now, when he tries to do so, she who was his inspiration is mute.

supervision and is partly written in his own hand. No composition was inserted in the latter, till it had received his final approval; but in the former, which Ubaldini printed almost in full as long ago as 1642,[1] we can, as it were, watch the process of revision going on and see that the perfection of form is often the result of intense "labour of the file." For example, he notes, "I had some thoughts of changing the order of these lines, so that the last should come first and *vice versâ*, but I gave it up on account of sleep." And again, "This sounds more sonorous" or "nearer perfection," or (in one place), "The opening does not seem pathetic enough," or very frequently, "This pleases me." [2] Sometimes he makes his corrections in the hours before dawn "after morning prayers"; sometimes during his siesta "between noon and three o'clock," and once he breaks off suddenly with the remark, "I am called to supper." [3] Foscolo says that it was generally on Friday—the day of fast and penitence—that he undertook his laborious revision; but I doubt if this remark is supported by the manuscript. The same critic adds: "It requires a profound knowledge of Italian to perceive that, after such perplexing scruples, he always adopts those words which combine at once most harmony, elegance and energy." [4] The same "profound knowledge" should be (but seldom is) possessed by a competent translator [5]; and its absence (with other defects) makes the difficulty of translating the *Rime* almost insuperable.[6]

The accidental preservation of this "draft," with its various dates of composition from 1337 to 1374 (the last year of his life) enables us to see that, if Petrarch could rarely spend time on his Italian poems, it was a "relaxation" which he took most seriously, and to which he gave much pains during a long course

[1] *Le Rime di M. F. P., estratto da un suo originale* (Rome, 1642, by F. Ubaldini)—reprinted in an altered form in 1750.

[2] "Hæc est sonantior . . . proximior perfectioni . . . hoc placet."

[3] I cannot discover all Foscolo's quotations in the 1642 edition; so I am compelled to conclude either that he has misquoted or that the edition of 1750 is more complete.

[4] *Op. cit.* p. 58.

[5] Tomlinson (*The Sonnet*, pp. 108–129) gives many examples of misunderstanding and actual mistranslation.

[6] This is partly due to the impossible task of reproducing the melody of the Italian. The only complete translation known to me is that of R. G. McGregor (1851, see Bohn's edition of 1859). The best translations of separate poems are by Lady Dacre and Mrs. Jerrold.

of years. No doubt it was imposed upon him by his desire to leave an authoritative copy, to which the many variations and errors in manuscripts passing from hand to hand could be referred as a standard. It is almost as if he divined from afar the coming invention of printing, which would reduce these variations to insignificance. But does not this excessive study of "form" tend to destroy the spontaneity, the natural charm of his poetry? Can we believe in the reality of a passion in which the hand of the artist is so patent? Foscolo would reply that a man of genius has stronger feelings than others, and therefore retains them for a longer time.[1] Many of Petrarch's pieces, he says, "were conceived at moments when he was under the immediate influence of passion, but were written many days, perhaps many months, and certainly perfected many years afterwards."[2] It is important to remember this distinction between the original conception and the complete execution of a poem. Surely no poet can fairly be accused of insincerity or want of truth to nature because of his intense preoccupation with technique. The question is rather, as Koerting puts it,[3] whether "the form becomes the mistress when it ought to be merely the handmaid," whether "instead of the thought determining the form, the form does not too often determine the thought." It must be admitted that the latter sometimes happens in Petrarch's least successful pieces. The thought is occasionally meagre, and the poet consequently seems to fail in inspiration. He tries to dazzle us by conceits and antitheses, which in reality tell us nothing new; and the sonnet, which a later Italian poet[4] compared to the "bed of Procrustes," offers a temptation to this kind of writing. Its limits are so narrow and its rules so severe that the tinsel of epigram sometimes takes the place of sincere feeling. It was already a settled canon that the sonnet must contain only one strain of thought, culminating in an impressive close. Petrarch's best always conform to this rule; but in some, while the "octave" (the two quatrains) is fine, the "sestet" (the two tercets) contains some frigid subtlety, which spoils the general effect. Yet no artist, however great, can always

[1] I have my doubts as to the truth of the conclusion. See Chap. XVI. on the end of Dialogue I. of the *Secret* (Vol. II.)

[2] *Op. cit.* p. 60.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 710.

[4] The poet Benedetto Menzini in his *Art of Poetry* (published in 1681).

maintain the level of his highest achievement; in more than three hundred sonnets there must inevitably be some failures. The "Petrarchists"—his later imitators—naturally found it easier to copy his faults than to emulate his successes [1]; and his influence upon the development of lyric cannot fairly be judged by their absurd banalities. Although Petrarch himself possessed a marvellous musical ear, it has been well observed that his taste was fine, but not sure enough.[2] "When he is warmed by feeling," says Gaspary,[3] "he rarely goes astray"; but in less happy moments he sinks into affectation or mere rhetoric.

Perhaps this is the Nemesis of an undue worship of "form," and yet his mastery in the art of sonnet-structure gave the law to the Latin peoples for many ages. All but twenty-seven of his sonnets follow the same system of rhyming in the quatrains; and there are only three important variations in the rhyming of the tercets. Mr. Tomlinson has shown [4] that these three "types" in Petrarch are repeated in almost the same proportion in the sonnets of Vittoria Colonna, Michael Angelo, and Torquato Tasso. No better proof could be given of his acknowledged lyrical pre-eminence during the next two centuries in the land of his birth. The English sonnet can be proved to have developed from the Italian in accordance with the genius of the language; but the rhyming couplet at the close, which never occurs in Petrarch, would have offended the sensitive Italian ear. He would have regarded the Miltonic sonnet with its frequent neglect of a pause between the "octave" and the "sestet" as still more contrary to established rule.[5] Yet, despite his recognized mastery of the sonnet, it may be doubted whether its restrictions were really favourable to his genius. The cramping effect of the "sestina"—that most difficult form, in which he is rarely successful—placed him at a still greater disadvantage. The leading features of his imagination, as Gaspary has well

[1] I reserve a notice of "Petrarchism" for a later chapter (XLV. in Book VIII.).

[2] R. L. Ginguené, *Histoire litteraire d'Italie*, II. 565.

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 407.

[4] *Op. cit.* 6–9.

[5] Mr. Tomlinson (pp. 75, 79) thinks that Milton's sonnets are closer to the Italian type than those of any other English poet. But, though his rhyme-system is similar, he violates the above rule in twelve sonnets out of twenty-three.

remarked,[1] are its richness and breadth; and for these the Canzone, with its larger space and more extended modulation, afforded a wider scope. I subscribe unreservedly to the view of Mr. Garnett [2] and Mr. Reeve,[3] which was the original opinion of Hallam,[4] that Petrarch shows himself at his best in his Canzoni.[5] The sentiment seems less forced and more natural; and, in those specimens—alas! too few—in which he frees himself from the chains of his hapless love and speaks in the tones of reverent faith or fervent patriotism, he reaches a height which can scarcely have been surpassed.

Of some of these productions I shall have to speak more particularly when we reach the various dates of their composition.[6] We pass now from the form to the general content of the Petrarchan lyric. Omitting the *Trionfi*, to which we shall devote a separate chapter,[7] we find that the whole "corpus" of the poetry in the definitive copy of the *Canzoniere* amounts to 366 pieces—317 Sonnets, 29 Canzoni, 9 Sestine, 7 Ballate, and 4 Madrigals. Of these (according to the ancient division) 266 belong to Part I. and 100 to Part II.[8] The ancient titles to the two Parts—*In Vita di Madonna Laura* (Part I.) and *In Morte de M. L.* (Part II.)—appear to be unauthorized by the poet himself, and are discarded by Mestica in his critical edition. His decision is a wise one, for not only does the gap in the "definitive copy" occur at a slightly different place, but Part I. contains twenty-six poems, which are unconnected with "Laura." The

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 410.

[2] *Italian Literature*, p. 74.

[3] In his *Petrarch* (Foreign Classics for English Readers), p. 54.

[4] In the text of his *Middle Ages* (published in 1818) Hallam rates the *Trionfi* above the Canzoni, and the latter above the sonnets. In a note of 1849 (III. p. 452, cr. 8vo ed.) he retracts the first (very unusual) judgment and expresses a doubt about the second.

[5] Koerting (p. 709) expresses a different opinion; he thinks that the Canzoni are too spun out to form an artistic unity, and are lost in the elaboration of the single atrophes. Sismondi, on the contrary (I. 279), considers them "more cramping" than the ancient ode. As applied to P. this mutually destructive criticism seems to me to have no foundation.

[6] In many cases these dates are conjectural or are much disputed; *e.g.* the works on the various theories as to the famous C. VI. ("Spirto gentil") almost form a library in themselves.

[7] See Book VIII. (Chap. XLIII.).

[8] The division which ends Part I. with C. XXI. ("I'vo persando"), and SS. 226 and 227 ("Aspro core" and "Signor mio") prevailed for some centuries. More recent editions, as that of Mestica (Florence, 1896), include these in Part II., following P.'s apparent intention in Vat. No. 3195.

position of these, which are scattered about in Part I. and include some of the best in the collection, can only be explained by a chronological arrangement; their natural place would be in an appendix to the volume.[1] They show that Petrarch's lyrical gift could be exercised apart from his misplaced love; they are mostly evoked by the call of patriotism, or by the ties of friendship. Part II.—if we again adopt the ancient division—is a succession of threnodies to his lost love; no poem on a different subject mars the continuous undertone of his grief—summed up at last in the Invocation of the Virgin, which strikes a higher note. Besides the authorized collection, there is an indefinite number of poems which for various reasons he excluded from it; many of these, which may have come down to us from copies made in his lifetime, are given in an appendix (" giunta ") to the older editions. It is never safe to take the authenticity of these pieces for granted; for he complains in his letters [2] that poems were circulated in his name of which he was guiltless. A recent collection of poems attributed to him, which includes no fewer than two hundred and fourteen, has been made by the late Professor Angelo Solerti.[3] The work must have involved vast research; but there is no critical attempt to distinguish between the poems certainly (or probably) authentic and those which are justly open to criticism.

In surveying the content of the amatory portion of the *Canzoniere*—amounting to more than six-sevenths of the whole—we are faced with the question, already discussed in this chapter, as to the reality of the poet's passion. Those who believe [4] that " Laura " is simply an artistic creation—a subjective projection from his brain and heart—will regard the incidents described, which are extremely few, as mainly fictitious or, at the best, of no real importance. But even these sceptics cannot be blind to the extreme melancholy which pervades the whole collection. " One thing only," it is justly said,[5] " is wanting to the encyclo-

[1] Mr. Hollway-Calthrop (pp. 40 and 42) classes them (as " set in order by Petrarch himself ") as Part IV. (reckoning the *Trionfi* as Part III.). I do not know any edition of the *Rime* in which this division is adopted.

[2] *Sen.* II. 4, XIII. 4.

[3] *Rime disperse di F. P. o a lui attribuite, per la prima volta raccolte a cura di Angelo Solerti;* ed. posthuma (Florence, 1909).

[4] As F. de Sanctis and some others.

[5] Garnett (*op. cit.*), 67.

pædia of emotion—the rapture of possession." That is to say, Petrarch's poetry is the lyric of an unrequited love. Here, at least, is one external fact which gives a certain unity to the whole story of his passion. The hypothesis of any other sort of unity appears to me a figment, which has no warrant in the nature of the man or in the circumstances of his career.[1] The idea that his motive was to depict the misery of an earthly love by contrast with a heavenly, without having himself felt the pangs of the former, is as preposterous as would be the notion that the *Pilgrim's Progress* was written by an unbeliever, who was interested in "the varieties of religious experience." But if we admit this central fact, why should we refuse all credence to the small incidents, by which in "occasional" pieces he has made his passion a living thing? It is evident that his acquaintance with the lady was of the slightest—confined (perhaps partly from his own early imprudence) to encounters in ordinary society or to chance meetings in a public place. It was no eager courtship of a coy maiden, culminating in a final rejection, which he was forced to accept against his will. Had that been the case, his secret would have leaked out, and his "worship" would have seemed merely ridiculous. There was plainly, as I have already shown, a bar to their close intimacy, which yet, according to the fashion of the day, did not preclude his devoting to her a faithful "poetic service" of twenty-one years.

During its earlier phases he would watch her dwelling unobserved, and think himself amply rewarded by a moment's glimpse of her person.[2] When his secret was revealed to her, she often wore a veil in his presence; and he had to content himself with a poetic imprecation of this covering.[3] The circumstance did not prevent his writing three long Canzoni in praise of her eyes,[4] which he regarded as her chief beauty. To this period probably belong many protests against her pride, cruelty and disdain. But one day she passed him in the street and gave him so kind a salute that his surprise deprived him of all power

[1] M. de Nolhac appears to suggest (*Le Canzoniere autographe de P.*, Paris, 1886, p. 28, n.) that P. himself considered the volume as part of a greater work which he hoped some day to complete. I cannot see any evidence for this theory, which attributes to him a constructive power that he did not possess.

[2] S. 79.

[3] Ball. I.; S. 30.

[4] C. VIII., IX. and X.

of returning it; to this moving incident he alludes in four sonnets and one ballata.[1] When he was again admitted to her presence, he was so tongue-tied that he scarcely dared to address her; his excuse had to be conveyed in a sonnet, which closes with the line:

"He that could speak his love ne'er loved like me" [2] (ANON. 1777).

Probably he had some friend—it may be the elderly Sennuccio Delbene, himself a poet [3]—who took care that she should see or hear his most impassioned sonnets; but we cannot suppose that any other written communication ever passed between them. Yet he says himself, perhaps in a fit of spleen, that she cared nothing for verses [4]; his motive in writing them was not so much to win her approval as to ease his own smart. But although she gave him no sort of encouragement, he was able to pay his worship from a distance. He heard her sing, and his soul was rapt into Paradise by her lovely voice.[5] On some public occasion he picked up a glove which she had dropped, and though he was obliged to restore it, he devotes three sonnets [6] to his feelings on so fortunate an occasion. In three more [7] he expresses his intense concern on hearing of her illness; in later life she has trouble with her eyes, and though at first mortified that his own are not affected in sympathy, he is overjoyed when he can claim that he has caught the infection.[8] He sees her in the country surrounded with flowers,[9] or in a boat on the Rhone with twelve other fair women,[10] and he celebrates the peerless beauty which throws all others into the shade. Or he misses her from a social party, and feigns a dialogue with her lady-friends, who tell him of her own regret at her enforced absence.[11]

In all this there is nothing to indicate more than the most casual acquaintance. But towards the end of his long martyrdom there are some signs of her relenting. He goes to take leave of her on one of his departures for Italy, and reads in her unwonted

[1] Ball. V.; SS. 85, 86, 88, 92.
[2] S. 137, l. 14, "Chi po dir com egli arde e in picciol foco."
[3] One sonnet in the *Canzoniere* (89) is to Sennuccio. Solerti prints three more (XXX. to XXXII.), and gives a reply to the first. Other poems by S. are printed in Carducci's *Rime di Cino*, etc., pp. 228 *seqq.*
[4] Sest. 8, l. 12.
[5] S. 134.
[6] SS. 166–168.
[7] SS. 24, 26, 151.
[8] SS. 195–197.
[9] Madr. IV.; S. 127.
[10] S. 189
[11] S. 186.

pallor and in her eyes an unwillingness to lose him.[1] He sees her in tears and writes three sonnets [2] on the distressing spectacle, which leads him to weep with her. Some of his best poems are written to her in absence; and in one of these [3] he accepts the truth of a message from a friend [4] that she was troubled at their long separation. In a later sonnet [5] after his return he relates that on his gazing upon her too intently, she placed her hand playfully before his eyes as if to rebuke him for his unconcealed admiration. At their last parting, which must have been in the autumn of 1347, he reads in her sorrowful face a presage that they will meet no more.[6]

In the expression of his passion there is (if we except a very few pieces, which err in thought rather than in words) a sincerity and a purity which, by his own admission, are reflected from the purity of his lady. By what arts, it has been asked, did she manage at once to restrain any advances with rigour and to keep him in unrewarded service for so long a time? Can we believe that it was mere coquetry, which first held him severely at bay and then, as her beauty faded, relented so far as to abandon her mistrust and even encourage his dearest hope that she was not insensible to his devotion? [7] If she was the good woman that Petrarch sincerely believed her to be, we can surely imagine a less unworthy explanation of her change of policy. She might not merely feel pity for his sufferings, but also be conscious that he was trying to spiritualize the passion, which had once caused her so much alarm. They had both reached an age when the transports of desire might be exchanged for a tranquil friendship. More than once he laments that the dreaded blow fell just when an understanding between them on these terms was at length becoming possible. Whether such a development was really within Petrarch's power may perhaps be doubted; we may even think that, if it had been reached, his song would

[1] S. 98.
[2] SS. 122–124.
[3] C. XVII. ("Di pensier in pensier"), ll. 63–65.
[4] This is conveyed in Sennuccio's sonnet, "Oltra l'usato modo," which (strange to say) is not in Solerti, though included in the "Giunta" of many editions.
[5] S. 219.
[6] SS. 212, 213.
[7] S. 135 and SS. 45–47 in Part II.

have suddenly ceased, his "lyre" would have been struck out of his hand. The conflict between flesh and spirit which we see in his *Secret* is reflected in many poems towards the end of the first Part—especially in the noble Canzone XVII. ("I'vo pensando"). They are full of inconsistencies; they even illustrate his habitual irresolution; but such contrasts and contradictions are of the essence of the lyric of passion, which is rendered more effective by movement and strife. It is born, as sparks from a flint, from the clash of ideals, from the obstacles which impede the fulfilment of its dreams. We may conclude, then, that it is to "Laura's" virtue, to her steadfast adherence to the path of duty that we owe the full maturescence of his powers. Had she been more complaisant, they would have perished from atrophy; and perhaps the poet himself, in his gratitude to her for resisting him, was dimly conscious of the fact.

When at length he lost her, his first feeling, which is reflected in some of his letters,[1] was a secret sense of relief. The internal struggle was over; he could now devote himself without hindrance to the serener life of the scholar. Perhaps for some time he wrote little or no Italian verse. But his habit of brooding, of feeding his fancy with the image of his beloved, was too inveterate to be so easily overcome. His return to Vaucluse, from 1351 to 1353, when the woods and streams of his retreat, and even the streets of the hated city, restored her vividly to his memory, led him to discover that there was a lyric of calm, as well as a lyric of storm, on which he could fruitfully employ his Muse. At first he vows that he cannot sing, unless, by some miracle, his lady could be restored to life.[2] He would even persuade himself that his lays had never been written for fame, but only to relieve the burden of his woe.[3] But now he finds a source of inspiration in tender regrets, in the certainty of his lady's eternal bliss, in the hope of their future reunion. His earlier efforts in the new series are less successful, either because his grief is too poignant, or from a want of experience in handling his fresh motive. But by degrees he regains his old mastery; his felicity of expression becomes surer and more sustained. By universal consent "the second Part is deemed to excel the

[1] See especially *Ep. Metr.* I. 1; *F.* IX. 4, X. 3, and XIII. 8.
[2] C. XXIII. ("Amor, se vuoi").
[3] S. 25, Part II. ll. 10, 11.

first, as pathos excels passion." [1] Many would consider the last poem—the Invocation of the Virgin [2]—the finest of his Canzoni, and the eleventh sonnet of Part II.[3] the most exquisite in the whole collection. Throughout this series he writes more clearly; his refinements and conceits are fewer; his imagination takes a wider range. Still, as before, he sees "Laura" in the sights and sounds of nature, and interprets his own sentiments from them; yet now she is no longer his torment, but an angel who is waiting to welcome him to the eternal shore.

In this Part Petrarch may challenge a greater claim to originality of treatment than in his earlier lyric of passion. In its intense humanity his idealization of his lady is quite different from that of the Tuscan school. He could never have been supreme in any form of lyric, where his affections had not the freest play.[4] Hence in his best Italian verse we seldom find that ostentatious display of learning which is too conspicuous in some of his letters. He is too much in earnest to parade his erudition; and this may be partly because his lyric was intended not for scholars, but for all classes of society. Foscolo says [5] that in the *Canzoniere* Petrarch has borrowed but sparingly from the Latin poets. This is certainly true of his amatory lyric, in which his point of view, thanks to the influence of Christianity and chivalry, is widely different from that of ancient times. But Carducci, in his learned commentary [6] on the lyrics unconnected with "Laura," has shown that in that section of Petrarch's work his debt to the classics is greater than was once supposed. Foscolo, however, was the first to note that our poet often quotes Scripture,[7] and that in one or two places his

[1] Garnett, p. 75.
[2] C. XXIX. ("Vergine bella").
[3] "Se lamentar augelli."
[4] Koerting (p. 712) expresses the rather strange opinion that if P. had written his metrical letters in Italian instead of in Latin, his country would be able to boast of another work equal to the *Canzoniere*. In my view the miscellaneous nature of those letters is entirely unsuited to the lyric of feeling in which P. excelled. Some of them are almost "light literature" and could only have appeared in modern dress as "vers de societé."
[5] He says (p. 68) that P. thought the classics could not worthily be imitated in Italian. There is certainly enough imitation in the non-amatory poems to prove this statement (repeated by Tomlinson, p. 88) to be unfounded.
[6] *Rime di F. P. sopra argomenti storici morali e diversi* (Livorno, 1876).
[7] Pp. 69–72. He gives instances in SS. 24, 60, 45 (Part II.), and C. XXIX.

use of it is scarcely reverent.[1] In the fourteenth sonnet[2] he even compares his own preoccupation with feminine beauty, as exemplified in "Laura," to the Roman pilgrim's veneration for the image of his Lord (no doubt on the napkin of Saint Veronica). This unworthy illustration of the secular by the sacred is a piece of youthful bad taste, into which he would scarcely have fallen in his riper years. Yet in the choice of language he is almost impeccable. If his meaning is sometimes obscure, he never commits a solecism and rarely adopts a harsh phrase; and although six hundred years have passed since he first wrote, he uses scarcely a word that has become obsolete. This result may be due in some measure to the sway he exercised over Italian taste in succeeding ages.

[1] S. 173 contains at least a secular application of St. Matt. xxvi. 41 ("The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak").

[2] S. 14 ("Movesi 'l'vecchierel")—probably an early poem.

CHAPTER IX

EARLY TRAVELS (1330–1337)

PETRARCH was by nature of a roving disposition, and may almost be said to have been travelling all his life. Indeed, in the forty years from 1330 to 1370 he scarcely ever spent twenty consecutive months in one place ; for although for long periods his headquarters were at Vaucluse, Parma and Milan, he was continually shifting from the first place to Avignon, and from the second to Verona and Padua, while in the third, besides going on various embassies, he made three changes of abode in the city or its environs within six years. With all his love of solitude and of study, he was congenitally restless, always longing for a change of scene ; and on a review of his life, one is inclined to wonder, not that he left so many works unfinished, but that he accomplished as much as he did. When he grew famous, this restlessness became the subject of unfavourable comment among both friends and enemies ; and he replied with a defence which can only be called "a plea of guilty with extenuating circumstances." [1]

In his early years he had no means of gratifying this ingrained love of travel. But his acquaintance with the young Bishop Giacomo Colonna gave him the long-desired opportunity. His new friend was probably consecrated to the episcopate in the autumn months of 1329. A Papal Brief of June 29, 1328, concedes him a year before he need be advanced to the priesthood, but provides that he must take the subdiaconate—then and for a century past reckoned the first of the Sacred Orders—within that time. Meanwhile, in another Brief of July 1, the Pope committed the spiritual and temporal charge of his diocese of Lombez to his elder brother, Giovanni, who had received a

[1] *F.* XV. 4, to the Doge Andrea Dandolo, dated February 26 (probably 1353).

cardinal's hat in the consistory of December 18, 1327. The Cardinal acted, of course, through a commissary; and several months later (October 15) he was empowered by the Pope to contract a loan, not to exceed 2000 gold florins, for the administration of the diocese.[1] Over a year later (November 18, 1329) the Pope gave promotion, at Giacomo's instance, to four clerks, of the diocese of Lombez, who had held the office of Bishop's chaplains. The fact affords proof that Giacomo had then been consecrated, but not that he had already visited his diocese.[2] The first visit, involving a long ride of over two hundred miles, would not be paid till the following spring (1330); and this agrees with the chronology of Petrarch's life as deduced from his letters.[3]

The diocese of Lombez was a recent creation, having been carved by the same Pope, only eleven years before, out of the diocese of Toulouse, which was then raised to the rank of an archbishopric. The motive seems to have been, not, as some have said, the prevalence of the Albigensian heresy, but the unwieldy size of the latter diocese, which gave up about a hundred parishes to the new bishop. The see was erected out of the funds of a Benedictine abbey at Lombez, which had been founded by the Dukes of Aquitaine five hundred years before (810). In 1125 the Count of Comminges claimed the abbey; but the monks resisted the claim and put themselves under the protection of the chapter at Toulouse, which consisted of canons regular.[4] It was not till 1284 that the claim was abandoned by Count Bernard IV.; but the number of monks had doubtless dwindled from their subordination to Toulouse, and thus the reform could be accomplished without hardship to their community. The first bishop, Arnaud Roger, had been the last abbot, and the vacancy was created in 1328 by his advancement to the see of Clermont. De Sade expresses some surprise[5] that the Pope should have

[1] F. Lo Parco (*op. cit.* p. 172, note 1). His date is a year too early, as I have shown in that note.

[2] Lo Parco (*op. cit.*) insists that such a visit must have been paid. But these clerks were almost certainly chaplains to the late bishop, and Giacomo would desire their promotion in order that he might make his own appointments.

[3] See especially *F.* I. 5 of August, 1333 (to the Bishop), where P. speaks of himself as three years older than when in Gascony. See also Excursus III. on Lo Parco's chronology.

[4] Mary Lafon, *Pétrarque à Lombez* (*Revue de l'Aquitaine*, II. 163).

[5] *Op. cit.* I. 149.

sent a young Roman of noble family, to whom he was much indebted, to a small see in such a distant and inhospitable district. But the Pope was well aware that he was placing him among his own relatives. L'Isle Jourdain, the seat of his maternal grandfather, was close at hand and apparently within his diocese, while he was related, by the marriage of one of his aunts, to the Counts of Comminges, whose castle of Samatan was in the neighbourhood.[1]

Although their acquaintance was quite recent,[2] the young Bishop paid Petrarch the great compliment of begging him, as a personal favour, to accompany him as his guest on his first visit to Lombez. The poet says that the new prelate's influence over him was already so great that, if command rather than entreaty had been employed, he would have readily obeyed—indeed, he says elsewhere that his love for his friend would have drawn him " to Ethiopia." [3] He modestly suggests that the Bishop's attraction towards him may have been due as much to admiration of his Italian poems [4] as to his character or abilities. The invitation, though it took him farther away from his beloved Italy, gratified his taste for travel, and it proved the means of his forming friendships which were destined to endure. The Bishop had chosen as companions two young men of Petrarch's own age, to whom he soon became much attached. These were Lello di Stefano, the son of a well-born Roman, who was a kind of retainer of the Colonna, and Ludwig Sanctus, a Fleming from Beeringen, in the district of Kempen in Brabant, who possessed remarkable musical gifts. It was probably during this journey that the poet gave them respectively the names of " Lælius " and " Socrates " —the former from the Italian's gift for friendship, like that of Lælius in Cicero's dialogue; the latter from the Fleming's serious character, enlivened by a quiet humour.[5]

[1] Fuzet (*op. cit.*), p. 47.

[2] *Sen.* XVI. 1, " Fide, quam tamen nosse nondum poterat . . . delectatus."

[3] *Ibid.* and *F.* IV. 15.

[4] Giacomo himself wrote Italian poetry; we have a congratulatory sonnet of his on P.'s laurel-crowning, written in the Vatican MS. of the *Canzoniere* in P.'s own hand a quarter of a century after the Bishop's death. P.'s statement that, in 1330, he was writing much Italian poetry (" vulgari stylo, in quo tunc juveniliter multus eram," *Sen.* XVI. 1) is noteworthy, for none of the poems in his collection can be certainly referred to so early a date.

[5] In *F.* IX. 2, P. says that from his musical powers " Socrates " should rather have been called Aristoxenus, from the musical pupil of Aristotle, who wrote a treatise on Harmony.

The party set out in the spring—in March, according to de Sade, but they would probably not leave before Easter, which was on April 8. The journey would be taken on horseback with a sufficient retinue, and would follow the Roman western road passing through Nîmes, Montpellier, Beziers, Narbonne and Carcassonne to Toulouse. The distance was about two hundred miles, and would be covered easily in ten days, allowing for stoppages *en route*. The stage to Montpellier would be familiar to Petrarch; but the towns beyond would excite his curiosity, as they had all been Roman settlements, though then retaining few traces of that age. At Toulouse the party would stay for some days. Here the Bishop had to do homage to his metropolitan and feudal superior, the Archbishop Guillaume de Laudun, recently translated from Vienne. It is possible that the whole party were present on May 1 at the annual competition of Troubadours for the "Golden Violet," established in the city by seven poetic enthusiasts in 1323. The sittings of this college of the "Gai Science" were held in the University, where the prizes were adjudged. After the first anniversary in 1324 the Golden Violet was presented by the magistrates from the civic funds, and the day was observed as a general holiday. Unfortunately, Petrarch has left no reminiscences of the occasion,[1] for he has preserved no letters written during this tour. He twice [2] speaks of having visited Toulouse, reckoning it in the second passage among the "learned cities" whose Universities he had seen.[3]

Toulouse is only twenty-five miles from Lombez, so that the travellers' journey was nearing its end; but the remainder was very different from its early stages. They had now to leave the main Roman road, and follow bridle-paths across country, which were beset with briars. They were also approaching the northern spurs of the Pyrenees, so that the path was rough and stony, though there are no hills higher than 1200 feet. The region was then little cultivated and much exposed in spring to thunderstorms, which swoop down suddenly from the highest range.

[1] A. Levati (*Viaggi del Petrarca*, 1829) gives many details, which are for the most part entirely fanciful. The incidents of the tour apologetically inserted from this writer by T. Campbell in his *Life of Petrarch* (1841) are mere romance.

[2] *Sen.* X. 2, and *De Ignorantia sui ipsius*, etc. (B. ed. p. 1147).

[3] The statement of an early biographer (Giannozzo Manetti) that P. spent four years at this University after leaving Bologna is of course without foundation.

Petrarch freely confesses [1] to a terror of thunder; and both his approach to Lombez and his sojourn there were marked by a series of such storms.[2] The Bishop often expressed his surprise at the patient endurance of discomfort by one whose time had been mainly passed in study. On reaching Lombez they found themselves among a people whose patois was barely intelligible, and whose rude manners in many ways offended their Italian taste. The town was small, dirty and ill-built,[3] though if they stayed, as we may suppose, in the abbot's lodging of the disused monastery, they would enjoy a certain measure of seclusion. The country was wild and beautiful, consisting of rolling hills covered with heather and plants that love a sandy soil, yet with woods [4] in the valleys, and in the distance the snowy summits of the main range. The little River Save, which is not navigable, passes through the valley east of the town on its way to join the Garonne a few miles below Toulouse.

In this retreat, enlivened by the most delightful companionship,[5] Petrarch passed a summer which he described in his old age [6] as "almost heavenly—so that I never think of that time without a sigh." His time was free for study, and no doubt he employed some of it in renewing his acquaintance with the Troubadour poetry of Gascony and Provence. In a letter of later date [7] he says that he employed some of his leisure in corresponding, doubtless in Latin, with the pompous Professor of Civil Law at Bologna—perhaps Raniero da Forli—to whom we referred in a previous chapter.[8] These letters have not been preserved; but he tells us that they were written with more respect than those to the same personage which have survived.[9] He never associates this tour, as some have done,[10] with a visit to

[1] "Adversus fulminis fragorem timidior sim . . . id negare non possum." *Secret*, Dial. III. (B. ed.), p. 408.

[2] *F.* I. 5, "Tempus adversum"; cf. also *F.* V. 7, "Molestæ tibi Pyrenææ tempestates."

[3] De Sade, I. p. 157.

[4] L. Couture (*P. à Lombez, Revue de Gascogne*, XXI. 3) says the district is dry and arid. Though this may accurately describe its present condition, there were many woods in P.'s time. Cf. *F.* IV. 12 (Frac. I. 225), "Pyrenæi saltus."

[5] *Sen.* X. 2, "Serenissimo comitatu."

[6] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. 6).

[7] *F.* IV. 15 (Frac. I. 241).

[8] See Chap. IV. p. 122.

[9] *F.* IV. 15, 16, translated in Chap. XII.

[10] As M. de Nolhac (I. p. 38, n.) and to some extent Koerting. See Note to this chapter.

Bordeaux and the Atlantic seaboard, which he undoubtedly paid later. The Bishop was too occupied with his new duties to undertake so distant an expedition, and his friends were not likely to go without him. Petrarch speaks in more than one passage of his devotion to his episcopal work.[1] He says that though Giacomo was not changed by it, yet "the very face of the country changed at his coming; he seemed not so much transferred to Gascony as to have transferred all Gascony to Italy,"[2] The poet listened to his sermons in the abbey-church and to at least one charge to the clergy, and noticed with delight the rapt attention which they excited. The visit lasted for five months, to which Petrarch looked back as the happiest of his life, though the weather was often unfavourable.[3]

About the month of October all the four friends returned together to Avignon. Petrarch had expressed an eager desire to be taken into the Bishop's service.[4] But Giacomo, with rare unselfishness, thought it would be better for both his fortune and his fame that he should remain in Avignon; and he determined to ask his brother Giovanni to find him a place in his household. Hitherto the poet had been barely acquainted with this prince of the Church, but, on this high recommendation, he was now to find him a patron of the utmost kindness and generosity. The Cardinal at once took him into his house; and though it is not clear in what capacity he served him, it was probably as his "familiaris" or confidential secretary, whose duties in that respect were light, and who also had the charge of his library. Some biographers have said that Petrarch was his private chaplain; but if so, the post may have been merely titular, for it is doubtful how far he could have discharged its duties without entering the Sacred Orders.[5] For a time, at least, he seems to have acted as private tutor to the Cardinal's cousin, the young Agapito Colonna, son of Pietro Sciarretta.[6] Petrarch describes

[1] See especially *F.* IV. 12, "Commissi muneris exactissimam curam habens," and also *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

[2] *F.* IV. 12 (Frac. I. 226).

[3] *Sen.* X. 2, "Cælo sæpe turbido."

[4] *F.* II. 9 (translated below).

[5] He may have read some of the offices of the Breviary to the household, but could scarcely have officiated at a public service.

[6] *F.* XX. 8 (addressed to Agapito). De Sade says (I. 176) that he was brought to Avignon in 1331 for this purpose by his "grandfather" (really great-uncle) Stefano. He also strangely asserts (p. 177), without authority, that Agapito was no credit to P. as a pupil. The above letter

his patron as "beyond most of the cardinals the best and most innocent of men" [1]; and in his old age he says [2] that he lived under him "not as under a master, but a father—nay, not that even—say rather, a most affectionate brother, with whom I lived as if I had been at home and in my own house." The Cardinal was not much over thirty years of age; he was not only of a frank and modest disposition, but—what was then rare among high ecclesiastics—exceedingly fond of literature and men of letters. It was his custom to have some book read aloud when he was at dinner with his household [3]; and any envoy to the Curia who was distinguished for learning was sure of a welcome at the Colonna palace. We learn, too, from a later letter of Petrarch to Lælius,[4] that though the Cardinal's mind ranged habitually over high themes, he could be trusted to show pity and exert his influence on behalf of an oppressed peasant. He used great freedom of speech both with Popes and with royal princes; but his native tact enabled him to speak without offence and even to be held in high esteem.[5] If an Italian Pope could ever have been elected in a Conclave at Avignon, none could doubt that Giovanni Colonna would have been worthy of that supreme dignity.

His palace, which has now disappeared, was in the centre of the city, on the spot now occupied by the Hotel de Ville, at the corner where the Rue St. Agricol joins the modern Rue de la République. An old machicolated tower, in which the town-clock was erected in 1472, rises among the modern buildings and may be the only part now remaining of the Cardinal's residence. The palace itself was purchased in 1447 by the city from the Cardinal of Albano, and was the home of the municipal authorities till 1845, when the modern edifice took its place. The older building is described as resembling an Italian "Palazzo Publico," with a machicolated front and mullioned windows. The ancient church

proves the direct contrary. See also *F.* II. 10 (*ad fin.*) and Chap. XIII. below.

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

[2] *Ep. Post.*

[3] I take this statement from Mrs. Jerrold (*F. P. Poet and Humanist*, p. 23), who gives no authority; the same custom was observed at Durham by the Cardinal's guest, Richard de Bury.

[4] *F.* III. 21. See below, Chap. XIX.

[5] Ciacconius (1540–1601), *Vitæ et gesta Pontificum et Cardinalium Romanorum.*

of St. Agricol still stands at the back of this site towards the Rhone ; and if we may judge from a letter to Petrarch by one of his friends,[1] it was used at certain hours by the Cardinal as his private chapel.

Here, then, our poet now resided for several years as a trusted and honoured member of the Cardinal's suite. In a letter of thirteen years later [2] to his patron, he speaks in the warmest and most grateful terms of the considerate treatment he had experienced.

" What kindliness you have shown me in our daily intercourse, as if we had been equals, although you are my lord ! What freedom I have enjoyed, as one living dependent upon the will of a superior ! What condescension and honour and privileges and partnership in your secrets have you showered upon me ! "

Petrarch then proceeds to relate a story which, as he evidently feels, reflects the highest honour on his correspondent no less than on himself. At an early period of his stay [3] there had been ill-feeling between some of the Cardinal's retainers, which had resulted in a brawl, and even in the use of cold steel.

" When, having taken the judgment-seat in just indignation, you had assembled your household and administered an oath to all—even to your own brother Agapito, Bishop of Luni—that they would speak the truth, I was holding out my hand for the copy of the Gospels, but in the height of your anger, you drew it back and said in the hearing of all that you would be satisfied with my simple word. And when similar cases happened afterwards—lest you should seem to have repented of the kindness of the act or to have done it on the spur of the moment—you never suffered me to take the oath, though all the others did so. Could anything be more splendid than the high opinion of such a father ? Let misers put what price they will on gold and gems, they can put no price on this. . . . Do you think I can forget such things ? "

Some biographers have said [4] that his two companions at

[1] See the letter of Guglielmo da Pastrengo to P. in *Var.* 34 of the Bâle edition (p. 1128) : " Nunc in Agricolæ nostri æde jactaris ; vacas sacris " (translated in Vol. II.).

[2] *F.* V. 2 (of October 7, 1343).

[3] In the sequel P. calls himself " adolescens," which indicates an early date.

[4] Fuzet (p. 49) and Hollway-Calthrop (p. 50).

Lombez were taken into the Cardinal's employ at the same time with himself. In the case of Socrates there is evidence [1] that he belonged to the Cardinal's household sixteen years later (September 9, 1347); but this may only mean that he lodged there, for he seems to have held some salaried post in connexion with the Curia. He lived at Avignon [2]—it would seem continuously—till his death in 1361, and he was intimate with all the poet's friends both of high and low rank; but it is curious that Petrarch never, in his letters to this friend, makes the smallest allusion to the Cardinal. The Bishop of Lombez while he lived, appears to have retained Lælius in his service [3]; but, after his death in 1341, the latter passed into the Cardinal's household. Luca Cristiano, an old acquaintance of Petrarch at college, joined the Cardinal's suite at a later time.

One object of Bishop Giacomo in returning from Lombez with his friends in the autumn of 1330 was to see his old father Stefano, who was shortly expected to arrive from Rome. We know neither the exact time nor the length of his visit, but it was probably early in 1331, and it was long enough for him to become much attached to Petrarch. The poet looked upon him with awe as "the equal of any hero of ancient Rome" [4]; and he seems to have delighted the old man by his eager inquiries about the monuments of the Eternal City. Stefano Colonna was now some years beyond the Psalmist's "span" [5]; but he was destined to live nearly twenty years longer and to survive all his five sons. Petrarch is never weary of telling anecdotes about this incomparable veteran, whom he calls "the pride of

[1] See *Note Petrarchesche desunte dall' Archivio Vaticano* (in *Memorie della Reale Accad di Torino*, Ser. II. t. LIX, pp. 1–32). The passage is in a petition of P. to Clement VI. of the above date praying that he may live with Ludwig near Montrieux. He describes his friend as "clericus Leodiensis diocesis (Liège) et confamiliaris suus in domo domini Cardinalis." Cf. also the pamphlet (which I have not seen) by U. Berlière (*Un ami de P., Louis Sanctus de Beeringen*, Rome, 1905), citing this and other Papal documents.

[2] Koerting (p. 81) thinks that he held a post in some Church court or was secretary to a bishop.

[3] Petrarch seems to imply this in his consolatory letter to Lælius (*F.* IV. 11), though he does not state it as a fact.

[4] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. p. 6); in *Sen.* X. 2, he calls him "a phœnix reborn from the ashes of the ancients."

[5] He was apparently born about 1257, and therefore was now seventy-four. He was alive in 1348, and perhaps a year or two longer, but was dead in 1352.

warriors" ; and in writing [1] to console a friend on the miseries of exile, he gives an account of the misfortunes of Stefano during his banishment (1297–1305). Boniface VIII., the inveterate foe of the Colonna family, was not satisfied with driving them from Italy ; he sent an order to all Christian kingdoms that they were not to be received or harboured anywhere. The poet describes this imperious Pontiff as one "who could never be moved by blandishments or submission, but whom death alone could conquer." Stefano had taken refuge in Sicily, for the Pope was then at war with the island ; but on the conclusion of the peace of Caltabellota in 1302, he was ordered to retire and obeyed with such dignity as to appear the King's equal. He withdrew in disguise to the coast of Provence, and being challenged by some spy at Arles to give his name, he fearlessly replied that he was the Roman citizen Stefano Colonna. After this he took refuge in England, and finally settled in France with Boniface's relentless enemy, Philip the Fair. Only then could he be joined by his wife and family, who had taken refuge with her relatives in Gascony. These particulars were doubtless learnt by Petrarch from Stefano during the visit to his son in 1331. The experience of this bitter time led the family, though still nominally Ghibelline, to be supporters of France and of the French Popes at Avignon. Their estates were restored by Clement V., and their influence was employed to relieve the woes of unhappy Rome. Stefano was Senator in 1306 and again in 1328, and he was prudent enough not to identify himself with the cause of Louis of Bavaria, though others of his family did so. The object of this visit in 1331 was probably to ascertain the Pope's attitude towards John of Bohemia, son of Henry VII., who had made an unexpected incursion into Italy and had been welcomed by the Lombard towns.

A younger brother of Stefano—Giovanni Colonna di San Vito, lord of Gensano—was staying at Avignon with his nephew and namesake, the Cardinal, about the same time. He had vainly tried to defend Nepi against Boniface more than thirty years before ; and on his failure and banishment, had spent many years in travelling through Egypt, Arabia and Persia—countries then but little known. He had now returned to Europe in broken health, with his sight seriously affected and his limbs racked by

[1] *F.* II. 3 (to Severus Appenninicola).

gout. To this confirmed invalid Petrarch devoted himself with filial tenderness; and in order to amuse him, wrote a comedy in imitation of Terence which he named *Philologia.*[1] He was rewarded by the warm affection of the elder man, to whom he wrote several letters of gentle reproof for the peevish and dissatisfied temper incidental to his complaint. San Vito had enemies at the Curia, who were apparently aware that he had taken a vow to enter the Franciscan order as an atonement for some past misdeed, and that he was now hesitating to fulfil it. Their machinations compelled him to leave Avignon late in 1331 and to resort to Italy, where in course of time he entered a convent at Tivoli. He maintained for years a correspondence with Petrarch, who saw him twice again in Italy before his death at the end of 1343.

In the spring of 1333 the poet was able to undertake a much longer tour through the kind indulgence of the Cardinal, who may have contributed to the expense. At two different times he gives different explanations of the motive of this tour; but on both occasions he admits that the motive alleged to the Cardinal was not the real one. In his *Secret* [2] (written in 1343) he says that the real object of all his travels, as well as of his retirement to Vaucluse, was to shake himself free from the chains of love; but in the *Epistle to Posterity* (composed about 1356 [3]) we have the statement that "though other causes were feigned to recommend my going, to my superiors, the real reason was an eager enthusiasm for seeing the world." There is no serious inconsistency here. Both the motives alleged were real enough, but the first was doubtless the more powerful. In the years before 1340 the sufferings of this most sensitive of men from his misplaced passion were evidently very severe. At Avignon he might meet in any street the face which he both hungered for and dreaded; and at least his eyes were ever falling on countless things that recalled her to his mind. At this time no one but his dearest friends—perhaps no one but his brother and Socrates—were aware

[1] Of this play, which has perished (perhaps he destroyed it himself in 1359) he gives one line in *F.* II. 7, "Major pars hominum expectando moritur." P. de Nolhac (I. 189, n.) points out that twelve syllables (ending with a short penultimate) here do duty as a Terentian line. Boccaccio (in his life of P.) had heard that it was equal to Terence. In a letter to a friend (*F.* VII. 16) P. speaks of it as still in existence.

[2] *Secretum,* B. ed. p. 404.

[3] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. p. 6), see Vol. II. (Excursus VII.).

of the deadly reality of his passion. The custom of feigning homage to some fair dame was so inveterate that the sight of his most impassioned sonnets—which he certainly did not keep to himself—awakened no suspicion. And so he had to suffer in silence, which for him was hardest of all; for the few who knew his lady's identity would consider her married state a proof that his adoration was merely "poetic"—an opportunity for displaying his lyrical gift. Such may have been the case with the Cardinal, if he deigned to notice such things [1]; the Bishop of Lombez, whose home was elsewhere, did not know (as we shall see [2]) who "Laura" was, although his disbelief in her real existence was either mere pretence, or an attempt to "draw" Petrarch, in which he did not succeed.

But if his "love-smart" was the predisposing cause of his travels, another, which was as real, was a restless eagerness to see new places and new people. It has been remarked [3] that Petrarch was the "first tourist" strictly so called—the first, that is, who travelled for pleasure and with the view of enlarging his mind. His statement that he had to feign other reasons to the Cardinal carries with it the implication that the latter would not have sympathized with this point of view. Petrarch does not add what his feigned reasons were; but certainly one was that he might search in monastic and other libraries for ancient manuscripts of classical writers. He tells us [4] that, on his long journey, if he saw some old monastery at a distance, he turned aside to visit it in the hope that it might contain some great treasure. There may have been also reasons of private friendship, which took him in the direction of Flanders. We know that he had companions with him at least as far as the town of Liège [5]; and the native district of Socrates was a little to the north of that place. One motive of the tour may therefore have been

[1] See *F.* III. 21 (about another love affair), which seems to imply that he did not so deign.

[2] *F.* II. 9 (translated below). P.'s first confession to him seems to have been in *Ep. Metr.* I. vii. (two years later) in which he gives no clue to the lady's identity.

[3] Hollway-Calthrop, p. 43.

[4] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac.).

[5] *Ibid.*, where he speaks of his "comites." I assume that this refers to the journey of 1333, though by a slip of memory he places it in 1329. P. de Nolhac has proved (*P. et l'Hum.* II. 40, 41) from the geography of the life of Cæsar, that P.'s expressions apply to this journey.

to enjoy his friend's company as long as possible when he was on a visit to his relatives; and perhaps Petrarch left with him his own brother Gherardo, who was also of the party.[1] They would start soon after Easter, which was April 4, and their first objective was Paris. Petrarch's opening letter to the Cardinal[2] is disappointing as a record of his travels. There is an almost total lack of personal impressions; and I strongly suspect that the first page of it was written when the letters were edited in 1359. More than half is occupied with a legend of Charlemagne, which he had heard at Aix, and for which he apologizes to his correspondent. This is all that he has to say of Paris:

"I entered the capital of the kingdom, the city of Paris, which claims Julius Cæsar as its founder, in the same frame of mind as Apuleius, when he visited Hypata, a city of Thessaly. For looking at everything with surprise, and eager to discover whether what I had heard of it were true or false, I spent no small time there; and when daylight was insufficient for the purpose, I gave the night too. In short, by going round and gazing, I learnt in great measure the proportion of truth and fable in the accounts of it; and, since the story is a long one and not to be explained here, I must put it off until I can relate it in person."

Petrarch here says nothing of the University—the glory of mediæval Paris; yet we may be sure that this was the main subject of his inquiries, and that he conducted them in the critical spirit which became an "alumnus" of its more venerable rival at Bologna. The French University was in many ways the antithesis of the Italian. It was the chosen home of theology and of the scholastic logic (dialectic); and the study of the Civil Law was forbidden within its precincts. To the Englishman Richard Aungervile of Bury, who had studied at Oxford, Paris was "the Paradise of the world, where were the promontories of Parnassus and the porticos of the Stoics"; whose "delightful libraries were stored in cells redolent of aromatics"; whose "academic meads trembled with the tramp of scholars and pacing Peripatetics."[3] Petrarch,

[1] I conclude this from the fact that Gherardo was known to P.'s Parisian confessor, *F.* IV. 1 (1336).

[2] *F.* I. 3.

[3] See his *Philobiblon*, p. 70, § 126, in the best edition (that of E. C. Thomas, 1888). I regard as entirely unproved the assertion of a MS. that the work was written by Robert Holcot in Richard's name.

however, while still fresh from its charms, could only thank God that he was born an Italian.[1] To him this "nurse of study"[2] appeared too "disputatious"; and thrice[3] in his works he alludes to her "Rue de la Fouarre,"[4] where, in the schools of the four "nations" (French, English, Norman and Picard) it was the custom to maintain a thesis against an opponent for a degree. This intellectual contest was known as "determination," and was originated by the students themselves, though subsequently organized and regulated by the University of Masters. A large audience, including, if possible, ecclesiastics of high rank, was collected to witness these wit-combats, and even passers-by were dragged in to swell its numbers. When Petrarch in later life refers to this "famous" thoroughfare as "noisy" and "babbling,"[5] he is doubtless indulging in a reminiscence of some days during this visit, when he listened to these "determinations" —conducted, of course, in Latin—with a curiosity which soon passed into wearied impatience. At this time the whole atmosphere of the Latin Quarter was one of barren verbal controversy, in which men, who only half understood the subtle distinctions of the great Schoolmen, refurbished the weapons of those giants in order to demolish an adversary. The originality and speculative freedom of Abelard's days had vanished, and had given place to a sham Philosophy, remarkable chiefly for its servile deference to authority.[6]

The most curious thing about Paris was its combination of rigid orthodoxy with a half sceptical turn of mind, as if the wrangles of the schools had unsettled, while professing to establish, the foundations of the faith. The disputants were apt to distinguish between philosophical and theological truth, maintaining that what was true in the one might be false in the other.[7]

[1] *F.* I. 3 (*ad init.*).

[2] So P. calls it in *F.* IV. 6 (Frac. I. 214), and also in *Ep. Metr.* II. xi., where he speaks of "Parisios, studiorum tertia nutrix." Bologna was evidently "prima," and to P.'s sturdy patriotism Padua may have been "secunda," though not so in fact.

[3] *Sen.* IX. 1; *De Ignorantia,* etc., p. 1159 (B. ed.); *Apol. C. Gall.* p. 1191 (do.).

[4] In P. this appears as "Straminum [or Stramineus] Vicus." It was so called because the rooms hired for the disputations were strewn with straw ("fouarre") on which the audience sat or stood.

[5] "Fragosus" (*Sen.* IX. 1) and "Strepidulus" (*De Ignorantia*).

[6] Rashdall, I. 364.

[7] We find an echo of this in the sceptical position of Pomponazzo at Padua two hundred years later. He denied the immortality of the soul

It would have shocked St. Bernard to hear thirty specious arguments advanced against immortality, even though they were followed by thirty-six, which were quite as good, in its favour.[1] This temper of mind produced a peculiar wavering in the general tone of the University. About 1320 the influence of the Nominalist William of Ockham, whom many regarded as a perilous speculator—if not an unbeliever—was paramount there; but it was subsequently destroyed by his adherence to the Bavarian Emperor against Pope John XXII. But in 1333—the year of Petrarch's visit—the University had been scandalized by the doctrine preached by the Pope that the saints do not enjoy the Beatific Vision of God till after the general resurrection. Two nuncios of the Holy See, a Franciscan and a Dominican, on their way to England, had just restated the Papal position in the schools, which had evoked loud protests.[2] Before the end of the year King Philip of Valois summoned the theological doctors of the University to Vincennes, where the obnoxious doctrine was formally condemned. Even the obstinacy of Pope John quailed before this solemn "judgment of Paris," and on his deathbed he pronounced an unqualified retractation of his former opinion.

Among the doctors called into consultation by the King was Roberto dei Bardi, a Florentine of noble birth, who was a teacher in theology, and three years later (1336) was appointed Chancellor of Nôtre Dame. As such, he was head of the Theological Faculty, and his licence was necessary for degrees; but the claim of the holder of this office to be Head of the University, though asserted for more than a century, had always found opponents.[3] At this time Roberto was one of the three Provisors of the Lombard College; he had been made Dean of Glasgow in 1323, and held other sinecure preferments. By some means—perhaps by a letter of introduction from the Cardinal—Petrarch on this visit contracted a strong friendship with Roberto, which he maintained

"only on the ground of natural reason," but accepted it as a Christian. Boccalini (*Ragg. da Parnasso*, I. 90) makes Apollo decide on this defence that Pomponazzo should be exculpated as a man, and burnt only as a philosopher.

[1] Rashdall, I. 365.

[2] Christophe, II. 29, 30, and Mollat, p. 59.

[3] Dean Rashdall, who on this question disagrees with Denifle, thinks the Chancellor may have been "Caput Studii," but not the Head of the University.

till the latter's death in 1349, though no letters of the correspondence have been preserved. Another University teacher, to whom he was attracted by their common Tuscan origin,[1] was the Augustinian friar Dionisio Roberti of Borgo San Sepolcro, who had already been five years at Paris, whither he went to take his doctorate in theology. He was as well versed in profane as in sacred literature, and wrote commentaries on Virgil, Ovid, Seneca, Aristotle and Valerius Maximus, the last of which he dedicated to Cardinal Colonna.[2] We may conjecture from this that he was already acquainted with the Cardinal, who had recommended Petrarch to his good offices. A warm attachment soon sprang up between the friar and the poet; and Petrarch seems to have chosen him as his confessor and confided to him the secret of his hopeless passion for Laura. Father Dionisio gave him good counsel, and really influenced his life by presenting him with a handy copy of the *Confessions of St. Augustine*, small enough to be carried in the pocket. Hitherto, by his own admission, Petrarch's love for the classics had led him to despise the works of the Fathers [3]; but, from this time forward, St. Augustine occupied a throne in his heart scarcely inferior to those reserved for Virgil and Cicero. He read this book continuously for forty years, and gave it away in the last few months of his life to a young Augustinian of the same order as his old friend. He then tells the young friar [4] that he carried it with him on horseback during the rest of this journey—doubtless drawing away from his companions that he might read without interruption—and that frequently afterwards he had it with him when travelling by land and sea. Besides the two Italian professors, Petrarch may have made the acquaintance of some learned Frenchmen; but we have no proof that he now knew for the first time his friends of later days, Philippe de Vitry and Pierre Bercheur.

[1] Borgo San Sepolcro is an Apennine town on the Upper Tiber in the extreme east of Tuscany near the border of the Papal State about twenty miles north-east of Arezzo.

[2] Fracassetti, *Adnot. in Epist. F. P.* p. 57.

[3] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. 3). P. de Nolhac (II. 190) dates P.'s attachment to sacred writers at the time of his settling in Milan in 1353, relying on *F.* XXII. 10. But *Sen.* VIII. 6 and *Sen.* XV. 7 prove that the *Confessions* were the instrument of the change, and that he studied them minutely from this time. See also *F.* II. 9.

[4] *Sen.* XV. 7 (to Luigi Marsigli) in Frac. (*Ital. Sen.*) II. 426, 427.

Leaving Paris towards the end of May,[1] 1333 (or possibly earlier), Petrarch and his friends proceeded north-east through Amiens (or Peronne), Arras, Lille and Courtrai to Ghent, of which he only says that it was a large and rich [2] town, boasting Cæsar as its founder and containing a populace of weavers and workers in wool. Thence they went on to Liège, which Petrarch calls "famous for its clergy." Then, as long afterwards, it was ruled by its prince-bishops [3]; and, even as late as the eighteenth century, it contained forty churches and forty-four convents. Hearing that there was a large quantity of books in the city, the poet stayed here longer than he intended in order to search for rare manuscripts. He found two speeches of Cicero which he had never seen, and took copies of them—one written by himself, the other by a companion. They had the greatest difficulty in procuring ink, and when they found some, it was as yellow as saffron.[4] One of these orations was the *Pro Archiâ*, which was not as rare as Petrarch supposed; many years later he presented copies of it to his friends in Italy.[5] At this point, if my conjecture be admitted, he would part from his friend Socrates, who proceeded to his home at Beeringen,[6] about thirty miles to the north, possibly taking Gherardo with him as his guest.[7] Petrarch made an easy journey of two days to Aachen (Aix-la-Chapelle). He mentions nothing of interest there except the tomb of Charlemagne, which he describes as "reverenced by the barbarous nations in a marble temple." By the latter he seems to mean the Byzantine octagon (Hochmunster), which is the most ancient part of the cathedral, containing the throne of the Emperors, and the marble sarcophagus in which the remains of Charlemagne formerly lay; but these had been removed by Frederick II. about a century before to a reliquary in the adjoining

[1] Koerting (p. 95, n.) strangely says that *F.* I. 3 (from Aix) is dated May 22; the date is XI Kal. Jul. (not Jun.), which is June 21.

[2] These words are in the (earlier) Paris MS. but not in Fracassetti.

[3] Cf. Scott's *Quentin Durward.*

[4] *Sen.* XVI. 1 (Frac. ii. p. 463).

[5] See *F.* XIII. (to Nelli) in 1352, and *Var.* 45 (to Lapo) about 1358.

[6] P. calls that home "Annea Campiniæ" (*F.* IX. 2). Campine—Kempen, as the Dutch call it—is a district of Flemish Brabant. If Beeringen, as recent research shows (see note 1, p. 299) was Socrates' native place, "Annea" must remain unexplained.

[7] Perhaps Gherardo went the whole tour with his brother. The chief thing against this is that P. says he was "solus" in the Ardennes, but by this he may only mean "without escort."

Karlscapelle. According to Petrarch, Charlemagne provided before his death that his successors should be crowned at Aix [1]—a custom which will be observed as long "as the Teuton hand holds the rein of the Roman Empire." The prophecy was not fulfilled, for Ferdinand, brother of Charles V., was the last Emperor crowned at Aix; the ceremony was afterwards performed at Frankfort-on-Main.

From Aix Petrarch dispatched his first letter to the Cardinal on June 21; and the following day, after taking a bath in the warm spring from which the town is named, and which he compares to Baiæ, he left for Cologne—a journey of about forty miles, or two days' ride. His next letter [2] deserves to be quoted entire, for it is an excellent specimen of his epistolary style.

"I proceeded to Cologne, which lies on the left bank of the Rhine—a place noted for its situation and its river and not least for its inhabitants. It was surprising to find in a barbarous land so much courtesy, so much beauty in the city, such a dignity among the men, such a remarkable elegance in the women. It happened to be the Vigil of St. John the Baptist when I arrived there, and the sun was already declining to the west. At once by the advice of my friends—for even there my fame rather than my merit had gained me friends [3]—I was drawn from my inn to the river by the promise of seeing an extraordinary sight. Nor was I disappointed; the whole bank was lined with an immense and splendid concourse of women. I was amazed; ye Gods! what forms and faces and dress! A man might well fall in love, if his heart were not pre-engaged. I took my stand on some rising ground, from which I could watch what was going on. There was a marvellous throng, but no disorder; the women eagerly knelt in succession on the bank, some garlanded with sweet-smelling herbs,[4] and turning up their sleeves above the elbow, bathed their white hands and arms in the stream, murmuring some gentle words in their foreign tongue.

[1] As German kings they were crowned at Aix; as Italian monarchs, at Milan or Monza; as world-sovereigns, at Rome by the Pope or his deputy.

[2] *F.* I. 4 (to the Cardinal).

[3] P. had as yet published no Latin works, and his conversation with these friends was in Latin. Therefore they were ecclesiastics, who were not likely to have read his sonnets; he may have been recommended to them by friends at Avignon or Paris, or perhaps by kindly monks at Liège. It is possible that one of them had met or heard of him at Avignon.

[4] "Pars odoriferis herbis incinctæ." The translation by Robinson and Rolfe (*Petrarch*, p. 301) and by Mrs. Jerrold, "half-hidden by the fragrant grass," is surely inadmissible.

[" Never did I more clearly understand Cicero's saying, which is expressed in an old proverb, that where there is no common language, almost all men are deaf and dumb. Fortunately I had no lack of the kindest interpreters, though you may wonder that that climate breeds spirits of the Pierian type. So, while Juvenal is surprised

' That fluent Gaul Britons hath taught to plead,' [1]

let him marvel too

' That sage Almaine hath nourished able poets.'

But that I may not mislead you, please understand that there is no Virgil here, but many Ovids [2]; so the prophecy is true which the latter places at the end of his *Metamorphoses*, feeling confidence either in the kindness of posterity or in his own genius. For wherever the Roman power, or even the Roman name, has extended over a conquered world, there is he read with the plaudits of an approving people.] [3]

" When there was anything to be heard or said, I used these companions instead of my own ears and tongue. And so, not understanding the scene I have described, I addressed one of them in the lines of Virgil:

' What means this concourse towards the river?
What seek these blessed souls?' [4]

He replied that it was a very old national ceremony, for the people firmly believed—especially the women—that all mishaps of the year would be purged away by that day's ablution in the river, and that a happier time would succeed; and so this rite of washing had been, and must always be, strictly performed. To this I rejoined with a smile: ' O too happy dwellers by the Rhine,[5] whose miseries are purged by him! Neither Po nor Tiber has ever availed to wash away ours. You pass on your ills down the Rhine to the British, and willingly would we send ours to the Africans and Illyrians; but our streams, it would seem, are too sluggish!' At which they laughed, and at last, late in the evening, we left the river-side.

[1] *Sat.* XV. l. 111. The second line seems improvised by Petrarch.

[2] P. may mean (as de Nolhac, I. p. 180) that there were many MSS. of Ovid.

[3] " Quâque patet domitis Romama potentia terris
Ore legat proprio," etc. (*Met.* XV. 877–879).
The passage in brackets is probably a later insertion.

[4] *Æneid*, VI. 318, 319:
" Quid vult concursus ad amnem?
Quidve petunt animæ? "

[5] I borrow here the excellent translation of Mr. Hollway-Calthrop.

"On the few following days, I went round the city with the same escort—an excursion which I enjoyed not so much for the things seen as from the recollection of our ancestors, who had left such splendid monuments of the Roman power so far from their own country. Especially there came to my mind Marcus Agrippa the founder of that colony, a noble builder and warrior, who, though he raised many grand edifices at home and abroad, yet judged that city as worthiest to take his name [1]—the name of one whom Augustus deigned to choose for his son-in-law, the husband of the daughter, who, whatever may be said against her, was his only and beloved child and of the highest rank.

"I saw together the bodies of many thousand holy virgins,[2] and the earth dedicated to their noble relics—earth which, they say, will reject any unworthy corpse. I saw the Capitol,[3] a copy of ours [4] except that in the latter, instead of a senate discussing peace and war, you here have a choir of handsome youths and maidens, singing together by night in eternal concord the praises of God. In the one was heard the noise of wheels and of arms and the groans of captives; in the other you hear joy and repose and festal sounds: in short, there you had the triumphs of war, here you have those of peace. In the centre of the town I saw a church, most beautiful, though unfinished,[5] which they not unjustly extol above all others. There I saw with veneration the bodies of the royal Magi, which had been brought in three stages [6] from the east to the west—those kings, who, we read,

[1] H. Reeve (*Petrarch*, in Foreign Classics for English Readers, p. 72), says that P. is mistaken in ascribing the colony to Agrippa. It was founded by his granddaughter Agrippina, the wife of Claudius, in the year 51, because it was her birthplace. But the city, in or near which she was born, owed its existence to Agrippa, who, in 38 B.C. transplanted the Ubii thither. That, I suppose, is why Tacitus calls Agrippa its founder (*Germania*, c. 28), though he had mentioned the foundation of the colony by Agrippina (*Annals*, XII. 27); but P. had never seen the works of Tacitus.

[2] The relics of the 11,000 virgins are now—and presumably were then—to be seen in the Church of St. Ursula, a British princess who was their leader in A.D. 352. The number is said to be a mistaken reading of an inscription, "XI. M. V." (eleven martyred virgins).

[3] The reference is to the Church of Sta. Maria im Capitol, which was traditionally said to have been built on the site of the Capitol of the Roman colony, afterwards the palace of the Franconian Kings.

[4] P. is of course speaking as an Italian, for he was not yet a Roman citizen.

[5] The foundation of the "Dom" was laid in 1243, and the choir was finished in 1322. In P.'s time the two transepts were in building.

[6] Literally "three leaps." They were brought by St. Helena to Constantinople in 326, taken to Milan by its Archbishop Eustorgius in 997, and given by Frederick Barbarosso to Reinald of Cologne in 1164. I do not know why de Sade (I. 213) dates the second "leap" in 330. My authority is Giulini, *Memorie di Milano* (II. 443).

adored with their gifts the heavenly King, then an infant in the manger.

" Here you may think, excellent father, that I have exceeded all bounds of moderation and have recorded more than I need. I confess I have ; but it was from anxiety to obey your commands. Of your many injunctions when I left you, the last was that I was to tell you as fully in writing about the countries I visited and all I saw or heard, as I should by word of mouth ; I was not to spare the pen, or study terseness and ornament and the picturesque, but put in everything ; in fine, you told me to write, like Cicero, 'whatever came uppermost.'[1] I made that promise, and I think I have kept it by frequent letters during my tour. If you had bidden me speak of higher things, I should have made the attempt ; though I think the object of letters should be, not to increase the writer's importance, but to inform the reader. If we want to ' show off ' we can do so in our books ; in our letters we should simply talk together.

" To proceed. I left Cologne on June 29,[2] in such heat and dust that I often sighed after Virgil's : ' Alpine snows and frosts of Rhine.'[3] Then I traversed the forest of Ardennes[4]—long known to me from books, but in experience dismal and appalling —crossed it alone,[5] and, what will surprise you most, in time of war,[6] but they say that God helps the foolhardy. To-day—for I will not retrace with my pen the long journey just completed on my horse—I reached Lyons, after travelling through many countries. This, too, was a colony of the Romans. Here two rivers meet that run into our sea—the Rhone and what its people call the Saone (anciently the Arar). But of this I will say no more ; they unite for their course to you, the first seeming to drag on the second against its will,[7] and their mingled streams

[1] " Quidquid in buccam venerit." This colloquial phrase occurs in the letters to Atticus (I. 12 and XII. 1). P. had not then seen these letters ; he is referring to Seneca (Ep. 118, 1) who quotes the first passage.

[2] The earlier Paris MS. gives this date, instead of the 30th.

[3] Eclogue X. 47.

[4] The forest so called was then much more extensive than at present, extending from French Hainault to the borders of Switzerland.

[5] This may only mean " without armed escort " ; he would have had a servant with him, and perhaps his brother Gherardo (see note 7, p. 307).

[6] We can only conjecture what this " war " may have been. De Sade suggests a dispute between the Count of Flanders and the Duke of Brabant about the town of Malines ; but that would surely be much too far west. P. must have passed through Trèves, the Duchy of Lorraine and the western part of Franche-Comté. Therefore the " war " may have been one of the many armed affrays between the Dukes of Lorraine and the Bishops of Metz.

[7] The elder Pitt in a famous speech compared the coalition of Fox and Newcastle to the union of these streams ; " the one gentle, feeble, languid . . . the other a boisterous and impetuous torrent " (*Macaulay's Essays*, cr. 8vo ed. p. 304). That Petrarch should have thought the

wash the walls of Avignon, where the Roman Pontiff holds yourself and the whole world captive. As I entered Lyons this morning, I chanced to meet your servant, and plied him, as returning travellers do, with a thousand questions. Only one did he answer by informing me that your noble brother, whom I was making my best speed to join, had gone on to Rome without me. At this news my ardour both for inquiry and return suddenly cooled. And so I propose to wait here till the summer heat also cools, which till now I had scarcely felt, and until rest restores my freshness; for I felt tired directly I heard his news. There is no fatigue like that of the mind; if my weariness continues, I shall use the Rhone as a means of conveyance. Meanwhile, that you may know where I am, I have taxed my energy to send you this by special messenger. To your brother—once my leader, now (pardon my vexation) my deserter—I have decided to address my complaint direct, which I beg you will send on to him as soon as possible. Farewell and remember me."

From this letter and that which follows it [1] (they are both dated August 9) it is plain that there had been an arrangement by which Petrarch was to return by a certain date to Avignon, where he was to join the Bishop and accompany him to Rome. But the latter had been compelled by public events [2] to hasten his departure, and Petrarch's disappointment was naturally keen. Before the end of the month he would seem to have rejoined his patron, from whom he would learn the true state of affairs. The tour, which had lasted four months, must have given him much pleasure and enlarged his mind; but it had not relieved him from the pains of unrequited love. There are three sonnets [3] in the *Canzoniere* which must belong to the last weeks of his journey and are the first in the collection that can be dated with certainty. Two were written during the ride through the Ardennes and the third [4] either at Lyons or soon after he left it by boat. I propose to give translations of those poems only which have a distinct biographical reference; and two of these seem fairly to come under that description.

fact worthy not only of observation but of record indicates the new spirit which he was introducing into literature.

[1] *F.* I. 5 (to the Bishop of Lombez), translated below, pp. 357–360.

[2] See Chap. X. p. 393.

[3] SS. 143, 144 and 173.

[4] S. 173.

SONNET 143

(" Per mezzo i boschi ")

" Through woods inhospitable, wild, I rove
Where arméd travellers bend their fearful way ;
Nor danger dread save from that Sun of Love,
(Bright Sun !) which darts a soul-inflaming ray.
Of her I sing, all thoughtless as I stray
Whose sweet idea strong as heavens shall prove :
And oft methinks these pines, these beeches move,
Like nymphs, 'mid which fond fancy sees her play.
I seem to hear her when the whispering gale
Steals through some thick-wove branch, when sings a bird,
When purls the stream along yon verdant vale ;
How grateful might this darksome wood appear,
Where horror reigns, where scarce a sound is heard.
But oh ! 'tis far from all my heart holds dear."—ANON. 1777.

SONNET 173

(" Rapido fiume ")

" O rapid flood ! which from thy mountain bed
Gnawest thy shores, whence, in my tongue, thy name,[1]
Thou art my partner, night and day the same
Where I by love, thou art by nature led :
Precede me now ; no weariness doth shed
Its spell o'er thee, no sleep thy course can tame :
Yet 'ere the ocean waves thy tribute claim,
Pause, where the herb and air seem brighter fed.
There beams our Sun of Life, whose genial ray
With brighter verdure thy left shore adorns ;
Perchance (vain hope !) e'en now my stay she mourns.
Kiss thou her feet, her lovely hand, and may
Thy kiss to her in place of language speak,
' The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' "—WOLLASTON.

Clearly Petrarch's travels had not healed the wound which his heart had received six years before. Deprived of the long-expected pleasure of a visit to Rome, he had to resume his comfortable and studious life in his patron's palace.

On his return he found at Avignon an ambassador from the English Court, who may have already made the Cardinal's acquaintance. This was Richard Aungervile—commonly called, from his Suffolk birthplace, Richard de Bury—who had been tutor to the young king Edward III. He was entirely in the royal confidence, and had been sent to persuade the Pope and

[1] He derives " Rhone " (Lat. " Rhodanus ") from " rodere," to gnaw, which of course is not correct.

the Court of France not to intervene by mediation or otherwise in the quarrel which had arisen between England and Scotland. About eighteen months before [1] Richard had been sent as envoy to the Pope on a different matter; but his stay then was very brief, lasting only a few days. Now he had a much more difficult part to play, for the Pope must have been aware that Edward had not really abandoned his claim to the crown of France; and Richard would need some diplomatic skill to parry inconvenient inquiries on the subject. We do not know when he reached Avignon; but though he left England towards the end of April,[2] he seems to have been accredited to Paris as well, and he may even have been already there during the latter part of Petrarch's visit to that capital. Their acquaintance, however, began at Avignon in August or September, 1333, on some visit of Richard to the Cardinal's palace.

Richard was of good birth—the son of a knight—and had distinguished himself in study at Oxford, becoming afterwards a Benedictine monk at Durham. He had been attached to the household of Queen Isabella; and as treasurer of Guienne he is said to have furnished funds for her plots against her husband. When the younger Edward came to the throne, he showered favours upon his old tutor, giving him prebends in three cathedrals and early in this year the deanery of Wells, with the promise of a bishop's see on the first vacancy of importance. He was Keeper of the Privy Seal and private secretary to the King, who recommended him to the Pope in affectionate terms. Petrarch calls him "a man of keen ability and not ignorant of letters" [3]—a kind of faint praise, which, from Petrarch's point of view, sums him up with fair accuracy. He is remembered to-day principally through his little treatise called *Philobiblon*, or *The Love of Books*, which, as its title implies, is the work of a bibliophile rather than of a man of learning. It treats its subject-matter in a light and informal fashion; but its thought

[1] It was in the closing months of 1331. De Sade places his acquaintance with P. in that year. For arguments against that view see the Note at the end of this chapter.

[2] De Sade (I. 167) quotes a letter from the King to the Pope's nephew recommending Richard as dated February 13; but a note in the Patent Rolls dated April 7 mentions his approaching mission (Cal. Pat. Rolls. 7 Edw. III. p. 17).

[3] *F.* III. 1 (translated below, pp. 360–364), "viro ardentis ingenii, nec litterarum inscio."

is shallow, and it has few graces of style.[1] Its novelty lies in the writer's enthusiasm for books, without much reference to their contents. At his death (April 24, 1345) he bequeathed five waggon-loads of them to Durham (afterwards Trinity) College, Oxford, with strict instructions that they were to be accessible to poor students. His learning, however, was scholastic rather than classical[2]; and if he were not skilled in conversational Latin—the only medium of intercourse available—Petrarch might set him down as an intelligent "barbarian." But he had been "from his youth incredibly interested in recondite subjects," and as the poet's mind during his recent tour had been much occupied with questions of classical geography, the Englishman would seem the very person to resolve them. Petrarch had long wondered what was the island to which the ancients gave the name of Thule, and finding that Richard was no better informed than himself, extracted a promise that he would consult his ample library on his return and send him the result of his inquiries.

But when Richard reached Paris on his journey home, he heard that his King had nominated him to the vacant see of Durham; and when he arrived in England, he found that a rival, Robert of Greystanes, had been elected by the chapter and had either obtained or was seeking[3] consecration from the metropolitan of York. All these proceedings took place without the royal warrant, and they were eventually quashed; but they must have caused much concern to the royal nominee, who was himself consecrated at Chertsey on December 19, but not enthroned till the following June (1334). On the latter occasion, when the King and Queen, the Queen-Mother and the captive King of Scotland were present, he entertained the royal personages

[1] Hallam (*Literature of Europe*, I. 80) calls Richard's "erudition crude and uncritical, his style indifferent and his thoughts superficial"—perhaps rather too strong an indictment. C. Segrè, in his essay on R. de Bury (*Studi Petrarcheschi*, p. 247), thinks he was unable to appreciate the culture of the Cardinal's circle. But England was not then such a lawless and uncultured country as he supposes. Has he ever heard of Roger Bacon and William of Ockham?

[2] He is said to have established schools for the study of Greek and Hebrew (Cave, *Hist. Litt.*, *sub* Buriensis, R.). In the *Philobiblon* he introduces five Greek words, but this proves nothing; P. himself, whose Greek was elementary, occasionally does the same in his letters.

[3] Greystanes was consecrated at York by the Archbishop on November 14; but the date of Richard's arrival in England is unknown.

and their suites, with many nobles and knights, at his palace at Durham ; and three months later he was appointed Chancellor. He only held the post eight months ; but shortly afterwards he was appointed Lord Treasurer, and again acted as envoy of his sovereign at Paris in 1338. In all the pressure of his public work it is no wonder if he forgot his promise to the humble young Italian at Avignon ; but Petrarch, who had news from the Papal Court of all his appointments, reminded him more than once of his promise by letter without success. If he received the letters, he may have caused a search to be made, and finding nothing, may have shrunk, as Petrarch surmised, from confessing his ignorance. It seems strange that Iceland, which had been known to the Popes, at least by name, for nearly three centuries,[1] should not have occurred either to Petrarch or Richard as a possible claimant [2] ; but no one had as yet attempted to graft upon the system of the Roman geographers the discoveries made since their time.

We must postpone to the next chapter those incidents of Petrarch's early career which are connected with public events. His next venture of travel, which took place more than two years later, would be regarded to-day as a very modest enterprise, but was probably received with something like amazement in the circles in which he moved. From his childhood he had looked at Mont Ventoux, which overhung the town of his schooldays and dominated the landscape even at Avignon, with an eager desire to set his foot upon its summit. It was not an adventure to be undertaken alone ; and after considering carefully which of his many friends would make the fittest companion, he decided against them all, and chose his brother Gherardo.

Except for his brief companionship with Francesco during his northern tour, which rests merely upon inference, we have heard nothing of this young man since the Colonna took in charge the fortunes of his brother. It seems unlikely that he also was taken into the Cardinal's household,[3] and we have no clue to his

[1] Victor II. in 1056 directed the Archbishop of Bremen to consecrate the first bishop.

[2] Both Iceland and the Shetlands have found advocates in modern times. Dr. Nansen (*In Northern Mists*, I. 53–65) decides positively for Norway.

[3] M. Henry Cochin (*Le Frêre de P.* p. 17) points out that, in his last letter to his brother (*Sen.* XV. 5), P. calls the Cardinal "dominum . . . meum," not "nostrum."

Dionisio, in recommending it to him as a book of devotion, showed no mean power of reading the human heart. It has not always been in favour with confessors in the Roman Church [1]; and Symonds says that the study of it fell into decay in the Middle Ages. After referring to Petrarch's admiration for Augustine, he adds:

"Few things in the history of literature are more touching than this spiritual comradeship—Petrarch clasping hands with St. Augustine across the Lethe of nine mediæval centuries, the last man of the classic age and the first man of the modern mingling their souls in sympathy of sentiment." [2]

The *Confessions* have been "almost equally appreciated by dogmatism and free-thought, by Christians and sceptics," [3] though of course for different reasons. It is a work for all time—modern, because the human heart is modern—containing some deathless phrases "engraven by the hand of genius upon the rock" [4] for ever. To complain that, in the objective prospect of a glorious view, subjective contemplation is out of place is beside the mark. The men of those days did not think so; and the modern habit of separating these two forms of thought into hide-bound compartments is, in fact, superficial. It is the higher type of mind which is filled with awe and reverence at the wonders of Nature, but at the same time marvels at the powers of thought and feeling with which it is itself endowed. Nor should we ridicule the conscience-stricken feelings which regarded the chance reading of an apt passage as an oracle from God.[5] Petrarch does not state that he opened the book, like St. Augustine himself, in order to seek such an oracle; and if he considered the "message" as a plain call to the devout life, it seems to have been long before he even partially obeyed it.

[1] Cardinal Du Perron (1556–1618) was against its use in the monastic orders.

[2] *Essays, Speculative and Suggestive*, I. pp. 297, 298. It is rather surprising to find this tribute from such a quarter.

[3] See the late Archbishop Alexander's lecture on the *Confessions* in the St. James's Lectures, p. 110.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 108.

[5] The custom of seeking an oracle by opening a book—preferably the Bible or Virgil—at hazard, was a very ancient one and lasted long. The Emperor Hadrian almost within a century of Virgil, consulted the "Sortes Virgilianæ" (Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, p. 450). P. alludes to it in *F.* III. 8 (Frac. I. 155, see below). Dr. T. Wedgwood (*Memoirs of England*, pp. 90–92) first gave currency to the well-known story of Charles I. and Falkland consulting the "Sortes Virgilianæ" at Oxford. The King's passage is said to have been *Æn.* IV. 616-620.

The letter is important, too, because, with the exception of another which I am about to quote, it is the only one among his familiar letters during "Laura's" lifetime definitely alluding to his passion for her. We may be grateful to him that he did not excise this passage before publication; for it shows that, even at this comparatively early date, he could speak of that passion in the severest terms. As I have already contended, there could be but one reason for this; but no harm could be done by publishing the admission eleven years after her death. Her identity in her lifetime was probably known to very few—three or four at most; and although others might suspect it, they could not be aware of the deadly seriousness of his passion.

The Bishop of Lombez had now been three years at Rome, and Petrarch's desire to visit him there had grown keener with the lapse of time. Towards the end of this year (1336) the Bishop sent him a letter, which brought the project to fruition. The following is an extract from Petrarch's reply [1]:

"Your letter on its arrival roused me from a doze, and packed as it was with jests, kept me gay and smiling throughout its perusal. In encountering the first of the many shafts that you direct against me, I pray you to observe, good father, how inconsistent your opening words are with the object of your letter. You often marvel, you say, that though so young in years, I can deceive the world with an art so deft that it seems to be more the result of experience than of nature. The compliment that you thus pay me may be short, but could hardly be more glorious! Any man with his eyes open can see how the world which deceives the whole human race, commends with its sprinkling of bittersweet a life that is encompassed with its snares; and we are determined accessories to this fraud, labouring of set purpose, against Apollo's counsel, to know nothing of ourselves. One man is swollen with pride under the guise of magnanimity; another wears the cloak of prudence over all kinds of villainy and deceit. A third thinks himself brave, though only savage and inhumane; a fourth, while a coward by nature, fancies that he is meek. Some are tempted by avarice under the semblance of frugality, others by extravagance in the form of generosity. All our vices have their masks, and hidden monsters lurk under an engaging exterior. Then there is the throng of passing, aye fleeting, delights—ambition, luxury, wealth dangling their allurements before our eyes. Every hook has its bait, every bough

[1] *F.* II. 9.

its bird-lime, every noose its attraction ; and on the other side you see human greed, regardless of consequences and waiting to be duped. On a track so difficult, slippery and doubtful, if there were a man whom nature or study had made so wary as not only to escape the world's wiles, but himself to deceive it—in appearance like his neighbours, but within utterly different—what sort of man would you call him ? Where are you to look for him ? His disposition must be of the best, his time of life both firm and temperate, his observation of the falls of others exact. Such is the kind of man you assert me to be—a very prodigy, if you are not speaking in derision. But if it is not true to-day, I pray God, Who is able to raise even from the dead, that it may become true before I die !

" But you go to the extreme of jesting when you say that, through my counterfeiting, many have formed exalted opinions about me. I allow that a few illustrious men have had the gift, through their genius, of exhibiting real powers to their admirers. This was how Numa gained the fame of holding converse with the gods, and Africanus of being descended from them. No such gift is mine ; indeed I have nothing to exhibit, and yet a kind of inexplicable favour of fortune has followed me from my cradle. I am better known than I could wish ; I am aware that, however small I may be, both good and bad things are said about me, and I am neither lifted up nor cast down by them. I know that the popular voice generally lies and one must pay no great attention to its whims or its prejudices. . . .[1]

" But your pleasantries know no respite ; they evacuate old and occupy new positions at your bidding ! You actually say that I have invented the name of ' Laura ' in order to have some one to talk about, and in order to set people talking about me ; but that, in reality, I have no ' Laura ' in mind, except that poetical laurel, to my aspirations after which my long and unwearied toil bears witness, and as to this breathing ' laurel,' [2] with whose beauty I seem to be charmed, that all is ' made up '—the songs feigned, the sighs pretended. On this point would that your jests were true ! Would that it were a pretence, and not a madness ! But, credit me, it takes much trouble to keep up a pretence for long ; while to spend useless toil in order to appear mad would be the height of madness. Besides, though by acting we can feign sickness when we are well, we cannot feign actual

[1] The omitted passage rebuts the charge that P. feigned admiration for St. Augustine, while remaining attached to the classics ; he replies that the Saint was as much attached to them as himself. See Chap. XVI. below.

[2] Though E. J. Mills (*Secret of Petrarch*, pp. 69, 70) chooses to ignore the fact, P. knew better than to write " Laura " in a Latin composition. His Latin name for his mistress, here and in the Virgil Note, is correctly written " Laurea " (a laurel).

pallor. You know well both my pallor and my weariness; and so I fear you are making sport of my disease by that Socratic diversion called 'irony,' in which even Socrates must yield the palm to you! But have patience, this wound will come to a head in time; and that saying of Cicero, 'Time wounds, time heals,'[1] will be fulfilled in me. And so against this pretended 'Laura' of mine that pretended Augustine will perhaps prove effective; for, by reading and pondering him much, I shall grow old before I am an old man.

"But when will there be an end of your raillery? How can I stop you? You go on to say that, misled and almost fooled—nay actually fooled—by my counterfeiting, when I feigned a vast desire to come and see you again, you have waited for me some time at Rome; but that now, like canny spectators watching the tricks of a mountebank, having opened your eyes and narrowly watched my skill, the whole scheme of my cleverness has become clear to you! Good God, what next? Your charges make me out a very magician! I fancy myself Zoroaster, the inventor of magic, or one of his crew—imagine myself Dardanus or Damigeron or Apollo or any one who has gained fame by that art! Is there no jugglery in making a man a mountebank with a word? But now our jesting has gone far enough; I want you to give me a serious answer. Suppose the longing to see your face, which I have borne with much trouble for nearly four years,[2] were to stop, though I keep thinking 'Perhaps he will come to-morrow, perhaps I shall be off the day after'; suppose the heavy load of care, of which I would gladly make you (and none else) a sharer, were to fall from me; suppose I were to lose my desire of seeing your illustrious father, your noble brother, your honourable sisters, the faces of the friends I miss so much—would it be of no value to me to see the walls and hills of The City—what Virgil calls 'the Tuscan Tiber and Rome's palaces'?[3] You cannot credit how I long to behold that city—desolate though it be and the mere shadow of ancient Rome—which I have never seen yet; as to this I should accuse my own slowness, if it were really slowness, and not necessity. Seneca appears to me to exult in writing to Lucilius from the very villa of Scipio Africanus[4]; he thinks it no slight joy to have seen the place where so great a man had spent his exile, and had left his bones that were denied to his country. If a Spaniard could feel that, what do you suppose I feel, who am an Italian? It is no matter of the villa of Liternum

[1] Cf. *Tusc. Disp.* III. 22, 53.

[2] This expression settles the date of this letter as December 21, 1336; for in *F.* I. 5, he speaks of taking leave of the Bishop with tears in April, 1333.

[3] Virgil, *Georg.* I. 499.

[4] *Ep.* 86, 1–8.

or the tomb of Scipio, but of Rome itself, where Scipio was born and brought up, where he triumphed alike as victor and as defendant, where not he alone passed his days, but countless heroes, of whom fame will never be silent. I speak of the city, to which there is none like, nor ever will be; which even an enemy[1] called 'a city of kings'; of whose citizens it has been written 'great is the fortune of the Roman people and their name terrible'; whose unparalleled might and empire (present and future) divine prophets have foretold. I will not now pursue the praises of Rome; the subject is too great to be handled in passing. I have made these hurried remarks that you may guess I do not hold cheaply the sight of the queen of cities, of which I have read, aye and written, so much, and shall perhaps write more, unless death break off my efforts prematurely.

"But if all this did not touch me, yet how sweet to a Christian soul to see the city, like a heaven upon earth, jewelled with the prisons and relics of the holy martyrs and sprinkled with the blood of witnesses to the Truth—to behold the image of the Saviour[2] and the footsteps[3] in the hard rock to be for ever adored by the nations—the place where to the letter, brighter than the light, is fulfilled that verse of Isaiah,[4] 'And the sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all that despised thee shall adore the marks of thy feet'—to visit the tombs of the saints and roam round the shrines of the Apostles, with better preoccupations than those of the troubled life which I am leading on the Massilian shore.[5]

"And, if this be so, why should you call me sluggish, when you know that my journey depends on the will of another? I had given myself to you—a small gift indeed, but meant to be for ever; you bade me obey another, if 'other' he can be rightly called, whose fraternal heart beats in accord with yours. So in this I feel guiltless; if blame there be, you must settle it between yourself and your brother. At the end of your letter, fearing perhaps that I might be offended with your pleasant chaff—for the touch of the lion, however gentle, is apt to dismay smaller fry—you apply a dram of perfumed ointment to the bruise in urging me so sweetly to love you, or rather to return your love. What can I reply? Feeling, both deep and joyful, must prevent my saying much; you know the truth, though I say no word.

[1] Cineas, the envoy of Pyrrhus.

[2] It is doubtful whether this refers to the napkin of St. Veronica (preserved in St. Peter's) or to the picture in the Lateran alleged to be by St. Luke.

[3] Cf. *Ep. Metr.* II. 5 (to Clement VI.). This apparently refers to the footprints shown in the ruined chapel of "Quo Vadis."

[4] Isa. lx. 14.

[5] This is merely a classical expression for Southern Gaul; it cannot mean that P. was already at Marseilles on his journey to Rome.

I am not so stony that I need exhorting to a love I so deeply owe ; would that in loving I did not need the bridle rather than the spur ! I should have had greater peace both in youth and early manhood. At any rate I pray you not to feign that I am feigning this. Farewell."

This letter is dated from Avignon on December 21, but there has been some difference of opinion as to the year to which it belongs.[1] Petrarch says that he had been " nearly four years " without seeing the Bishop ; and we know from the plain terms of an earlier letter [2] that they parted at the beginning of his northern tour in April, 1333. The present letter must therefore belong to 1336 ; and the only argument against this date is that in that case Petrarch must have followed closely upon the heels of his letter, and yet he says nothing of his approaching departure. The reason for this seems sufficiently clear. It was not till he had completed the letter—perhaps already dispatched it—that he showed a copy to the Cardinal with the letter from his brother to which it was a reply. The last two pages really contain an artful but silent appeal to his patron to be allowed to go ; and the latter, though very unwilling to spare him,[3] at once gave the desired permission. The letters contain only one faint allusion [4] to his route ; but they are supplemented by a series of three sonnets,[5] which can only refer to this journey. In his earlier letter to the Bishop [6] Petrarch had conceived as a possible explanation of Giacomo's " desertion " that he wished to spare him a sea-voyage, which he knew that he hated. But, as if to prove that no sacrifice was too great in order to see his friend, he now chose that means of travel as the speediest available.

Starting directly after Christmas, he must have sailed from Marseilles in a coasting ship in the last days of 1336, and in ten days or a fortnight he would reach Civita Vecchia, which he made his port of destination, perhaps at the Cardinal's

[1] Some have said 1334, forgetting that the Bishop, whom he had not seen for three years, was at Avignon when P. left it in 1333. Baldelli argues for 1335 ; but the letter of November, 1350, which he quotes in support (*F.* XI. 1, to Boccaccio), written in the fourteenth year after P.'s first visit to Rome, is really conclusive for 1336.

[2] *F.* I. 5 (translated below, pp. 357–360).

[3] " Te vix tandem permittente " (*F.* IV. 12, to the Cardinal).

[4] *F.* IV. 6, " hieme, bello, pelagoque tonantibus," showing that the journey was mostly by sea.

[5] SS. 51–53.

[6] *F.* I. 5 (Frac. I. 51).

suggestion. The latter might well be aware that the approaches to Rome were then unsafe for a single traveller, and so have provided him with an introduction to his brother-in-law, Count Orso of Anguillara, at his castle near Viterbo. Or possibly the vessel in which he travelled went no farther; in any case his letters to the Cardinal imply that the latter knew where he would take refuge. There may have been ports of call along the Genoese Riviera or farther south; and perhaps at one of these occurred the rather ludicrous incident commemorated in the 51st Sonnet. The poet caught sight of a laurel at some landing-place; and hastening to pay his devotion to it in honour of his lady, fell incontinently into an intervening stream. The incident may no doubt be allegorical; but the poet's naïve comment that it is better to have soaked feet than wet eyes rather suggests the contrary. The 53rd Sonnet plainly alludes to a storm which his vessel encountered along the coast of Tuscany between the islands of Elba and Giglio. He speaks of himself as an unknown wanderer,[1] and from this and other vague indications some of his commentators[2] have drawn strange conclusions injurious to his constancy. Such suspicions rest on the flimsiest foundation. His *Canzoniere* contain many pieces[3] which may probably be referred to the opening months of this journey; and, though Petrarch is often intentionally obscure, it is for that very reason unfair to subject him to interpretations which he would certainly have resented.

Landing at Civita Vecchia before the middle of January, he no doubt traversed in a day or two the twenty-five miles which separated him from Count Orso's castle at Capranica. That place is situated in the chain of volcanic hills stretching southwards from Viterbo to the Lago di Bracciano on the borders of the Campagna, of which the Monte Cimino, giving its name to the range, is the culminating point. The region is well wooded,

[1] " Sconosciuto e pellegrino " (S. 53). From this expression de Sade (I. p. 314) absurdly concludes that he went disguised as a pilgrim !

[2] G. A. Cesareo (*Sur le Poesie volgari del P.; nuove ricerche*, Rocca S. Casciano, 1898, 211–287) imagines that the allusion to " ministers of Love " in this sonnet indicates that he was " smitten " by a fair fellow-traveller. He is answered by E. Sicardi (*Gli Amori estravaganti e molteplici di F. P.*, etc., Milan, 1900. It may refer to the incident of S. 51.

[3] H. Cochin (*La Chronologie du Canzoniere de P.*, Paris, 1898, p. 60) would also date at this time SS. 30, 41, 71 and 77, Madrigale II., and Canzoni IV. and V.

and abounds in beautiful prospects; to the north, beneath the Cimino, lies the Lago di Vico, which occupies the crater of an extinct volcano. The imposing mass of Mount Soracte (Mte. San Oreste), which rises to about 2500 feet, was in full view to the south-west, and beyond it lay the valley of the Tiber. The poet was received here with a hospitality which he gratefully acknowledges in his first [1] letter to the Cardinal.

"Here I am on this 'mount of goats (caprarum)'—say rather of lions and tigers—where lives your Orso ('Bear'), Count of Anguillara, milder than any lamb—a lover of peace, yet reckless of war; intrepid in war, yet a valuer of peace; in hospitality unrivalled, in counsel vigorous, gently severe and strictly kind to his dependants, a great friend of the Muses, and a most elegant admirer and eulogist of genius. With him is his wife Agnes, your noble sister, bearing a name not opposite (as his), but suited to her character, of whom—as Sallust says of Carthage [2]—I think it better to be silent than to say too little. There are some ladies, your sister among them, who are best praised by an amazed silence. This harmonious and gentle pair seem to me—like roses and lilies—to flourish among the thorns and brambles of hatred; yet the roughness of others is tempered by their perfume. We have now been joined by that divine and extraordinary man, your brother Giacomo, Bishop of Lombez. I sent him a messenger with a letter to announce my coming and ask him what he would like me to do, since with the enemy besetting all the roads to your family-mansion, it did not seem safe for me to go to Rome. He wrote back, giving me a warm welcome and bidding me wait for him; and, after a few days he arrived on January 26 with his elder brother Stefano, whose splendid valour affords a great theme for poets. They had come through escorted by no more than a hundred armed horsemen, to the consternation of those who saw them, for we knew that the enemy could muster more than five hundred; but the renown of their leaders, which often decides a campaign, had made the way open. With these rare spirits I am dwelling in such happiness that I seem raised above the earth, and now scarcely long for Rome. We shall go, however, though our foes are again reported to have closely blocked the return to the city."

[1] *F.* II. 13. P. himself places it second; but in my view he has only given the priority to *F.* II. 12 because it describes his new abode. The "martial sounds" referred to in the latter must have been caused by the escort mentioned in the former, and P. can hardly have been at Capranica sixteen days (as in *F.* II. 12) before January 26—the day of their arrival.

[2] *De Bello Jug.* XIX. 2.

The conflict was simply the eternal feud between the leading nobles for supremacy in Rome—on the one side the Guelf Orsini with the Savelli and some minor houses, on the other the Ghibelline Colonna with the Annibaldi. Count Orso of Anguillara was an Orsini by extraction and had relatives in that camp; but he belonged to the branch of the family which had favoured the cause of Henry VII., and his marriage with Agnes Colonna in 1329 had attached him more closely to her relatives. Scarcely a year before, the two parties, though still breathing fury against each other, had sworn to a two years' truce (January 13, 1336). It is scarcely worth while to inquire which was responsible for the breach. The well-intentioned custom of appointing one new Senator from each party every six months had only produced further quarrels; swords flashed out at a word, and there was no constituted authority which both sides could respect. We happen to know that Petrarch was still at Capranica eighteen days after the escort's arrival,[1] and it was perhaps another fortnight before he set out. He spent his time wandering among the hills and drawing inspiration for his Italian muse from the beauty of the scenery. He thus describes his situation to the Cardinal:

"I have gained a place in the Roman territory most suited to compose my agitated thoughts, if they were not bent on reaching another goal. It was called in old days 'the mount of goats'—I suppose because, being surrounded by woods, it was inhabited more by goats than by men. As the spot gradually became known, the sight of its fertility drew to it some settlers, by whom a castle was founded on a prominent knoll, and as many houses as the narrow site permits, without losing its old name of the 'goats' mount.' Though itself unknown to fame, it is surrounded by places more renowned. Hence you can see Mount Soracte, illustrious as the refuge of Silvester,[2] but celebrated by poets before his time; on one side is 'the mount of Ciminus with

[1] In the autograph MS. of the *Canzoniere* (at the Vatican) he has written in the margin of S. 41, "13 Feb., 1337, *Capr.*"—an abbreviation which must plainly stand for "Capranica," and gives a useful chronological clue. His first letter from Rome is dated "The Ides of March" (15th).

[2] Silvester I. (Bishop of Rome, 314–335) was said to have fled to Soracte to escape persecution, whence by the direction of SS. Peter and Paul in a dream, he was recalled by Constantine, in order to heal him of leprosy. In gratitude for his recovery the Emperor is fabled to have made the "Donation of Constantine."

its lake 'mentioned by Virgil,'[1] on the other is Sutrium, two miles away, which is famous for its corn, and, as report says, an ancient colony of Saturn.[2] A field is shown not far from the walls, in which they say the first seed of corn was sown and the first harvest reaped in Italy by the stranger-king; and in reward for this marvellous benefit he was given a share of the kingdom during his life and deified after his death, being acknowledged as the 'Old King' and the 'Sickle-bearing God.'

"My short stay has already proved that the air is most healthy. On all sides are countless hills, not high or difficult, and with magnificent views. A shady wood all round protects one from the sun's rays, except that on the north a lower elevation opens out a sunny dell, where the bees are busy among the flowers. Rills of sweet water purl down the valleys; stags, does, goats, and such woodland beasts roam over the hills; all sorts of birds warble over the water and in the trees. I need not add the cattle and domestic animals, the sweet vine and abundant corn—the fruit of human toil—and besides these gifts of nature, the neighbouring lakes and streams and the not distant sea. Peace alone is banished from this land—for what crime of its people, or by what law or fate of heaven or of the stars is more than I can say. You would scarcely credit the fact; but the shepherd keeps his watch in the woods under arms, fearing not wolves so much as robbers; the ploughman works in a cuirass, and uses a spear as a goad upon the back of a refractory ox; the fowler hides his nets under a shield, and the fisher hangs his bait with its lurking hook upon a sword firmly secured; most absurd of all, the man who wants water from a well fastens a rusty helmet to a dirty rope! No one, in short, does anything here unarmed. The cry of the sentries all night upon the walls, the calls of men hurrying to arms, have taken the place of the notes which I used to produce from my gentle lute. Among the men of this district there is nothing safe or peaceful or human—only war and hatred and such devil's work.

"Here, illustrious father, I am passing my sixteenth day, half in good will, half in constraint; and, by force of custom, while the others muster at the castle with the clamour of soldiers and the sound of trumpets, you may often see me roaming over these hills and diligently pondering some poem to win me the favour of posterity. All are surprised to see me at leisure, undismayed and without defence, while I marvel at their being timid, anxious

[1] *Æn.* VII. 697.

[2] Sutrium (now Sutri) was an old Etruscan town, conquered by Rome about 390 B.C., and held as an outpost, with varying success, for eighty years till the Roman arms had passed the barrier of the "Ciminian forest," in the remains of which P. was now straying. I can find no authority for connecting Sutrium with the Saturnian myth, which is generally associated with the Capitol.

and fully armed; such are the caprices of human conduct! But if some one were to ask me if I want to leave the place, I could not easily reply; I should like to go, and yet I am glad to stay. Perhaps I am more inclined to go—not that I find any annoyance here, but I left home in order to see Rome. It is natural for the mind not to be at rest till it has reached the goal of its desires. This fact seems to me to give special colour to that opinion that the souls of the dead will be without the Beatific Vision of God, in which man's bliss is consummated, as long as they are apart from the body, for which they must naturally long. And yet that doctrine of many has been vanquished by a sounder judgment, and has long been buried with its author [1]; pardon me, I beg, for I know you had a warm love for the man, but not for his errors. Farewell."

It is interesting that we can trace some of the poems on which Petrarch was then occupied, and which he proudly, but justly, deemed worthy of the favour of posterity. They certainly include the beautiful fourth and fifth Canzoni [2]; for both refer to his great distance from his beloved and to the wild and hilly country in which they were composed. The latter, which is expressly dated in this year,[3] is generally thought one of the noblest of the collection; and its reflections on the setting of the sun, which from these heights could easily be seen sinking into the Tyrrhene Sea, together with its reference to the nations then gladly welcoming his appearance, not only seem a half-inspired vision of the New World one hundred and fifty years before its discovery, but constitute one of the finest lyrical raptures of awakening Europe. Before Petrarch left this beautiful region, he addressed two sonnets [4] to his kind host of which the first refers to the lovely scenery of his home, and the second pays a delicate compliment to his gallantry and courage. It would seem that for some reason, perhaps of health, Count Orso was debarred, to his great disappointment, from joining the escort to Rome and taking part in the expected fighting.[5] We have no particulars

[1] Pope John XXII., who had been dead over two years.
[2] C. IV. (" Si e debile il filo") and C. V. (" Nella stagion che'l ciel ").
[3] " Ben presso al decim 'anno," l. 55.
[4] SS. 30 and 77.
[5] It used to be supposed that S. 77 referred to some tournament which Orso was prevented from attending; but G. Carducci (*Rime di F. P.*, Livorno, 1876) seems rather to think it is some martial enterprise. The old interpreters (as Castelvetro) fancy that the " charger " (destrier) is used allegorically for Orso's body.

of the thirty miles' ride; but apparently, after all, they accomplished it unmolested.

Petrarch thus reached the "goal of his desires" about March 1, 1337. It can hardly have been earlier; for his short letter [1] to the Cardinal, which evidently conveys his first impressions, is dated "The Ides of March [15th] on the Capitol." It runs as follows:

"What will you expect from the City of Rome after receiving so much from me in the mountains? You used to think I should write something 'in the grand style' when I had reached Rome. I have found, it is true, a vast subject for future writing; at present there is nothing that I dare attempt, for I sink under the weight of so many marvels around me. One thing I must say has turned out contrary to your anticipation. I remember you used to dissuade me from coming, chiefly on the ground that at the sight of the city in ruins, answering neither to its fame nor to the opinion I had formed from books, my enthusiasm would suffer abatement. And I too, though I was consumed with longing, was not unwilling to put off the visit from the fear that the image which my mind had formed would be impoverished by actual sight, and not less by the effect of 'presence,' so hostile to great reputations. By the last, however, nought has been diminished, but rather everything enhanced. Verily Rome was greater, and its remains are greater, than I had supposed. I marvel now, not that the world was conquered by this city, but that it was conquered so late. Farewell."

We may in some measure share the disappointment which the Cardinal must have felt at receiving no journal-letter with an account of Petrarch's researches in Rome. The meagre missive translated above, recording merely his first general impressions, is the only remaining reference to the majestic ruins which he penned on the spot. The Cardinal already knew Rome, so far as a scion of one of its noble houses at that date could be said to know it; while Petrarch, like many a modern tourist, was probably too much occupied with registering in his memory the rapid succession of new experiences to spend time in putting them on paper. His position was, in some respects more, in others less favourable than that of the modern sightseer. On the one hand the existing remains of Ancient

[1] *F.* II. 14.

Rome were in a more perfect state,[1] though encumbered with the rubbish of a thousand years' neglect; on the other hand, there had been no attempt at scientific excavation, and the study of the topography was in its infancy. Mediæval legend still held undisputed sway; and, so far as Christian Rome was concerned, it would have been impious to doubt it. A recent biographer [2] has said that Petrarch visited Rome with a history in his hand. It would be truer to say that such history as he had —which was far more than the average visitor then possessed— was in his head, while in his hand was the *Mirabilia Urbis Romæ*. This anonymous work had already been the standard guide-book for pilgrims to Rome for nearly two centuries. Its stories were implicitly believed, and it formed the foundation of such knowledge as Petrarch's various guides were able to impart to him.

Some surprise has been expressed [3] that the poet's descriptions of Rome show so little trace of the critical spirit, and are mostly confined to a catalogue of ancient remains, following the lines and repeating the legends of the *Mirabilia*. It must be remembered that of Petrarch's five [4] visits to Rome three probably lasted less than ten days, and that the first and longest, which we are now considering, was confined to a few weeks. Had he carried out his expressed desire of settling in Rome in 1352,[5] he might have left us that minute description of the city, which its mediæval historian so much desiderates [6]; he would certainly have employed his archæological zeal in testing the assertions of tradition. He has left us four passages on the wonders of Rome, written at a later time. One of these [7] is rather a strange jumble of the relics of Ancient and of Christian Rome; two of the others [8] are mere rhetorical episodes in works

[1] For instance, much more of the Colosseum remained than at present, though it had been seriously injured by a fire in 1332; the Septizonium of Severus, which has now disappeared, was then to be seen in ruins.

[2] Fuzet (*op. cit.*), p. 97.

[3] See the Preface (p. v.) to the excellent translation of the *Mirabilia* by F. M. Nicholls (1889).

[4] In 1337, 1341 (for the crowning), 1343 and 1344 (merely in passing) and 1350—a devotional pilgrimage to the Jubilee, during part of which he was confined to his bed by an accident.

[5] *F.* XV. 8, 9 (to Lælius).

[6] F. Gregorovius (*op. cit.*), VI. Part II. p. 716.

[7] *F.* VI. 2 (to G. Colonna di San Vito), quoted below, pp. 343–349.

[8] *Africa*, Lib. VIII. 862–895, and *De Rem.* I. Dial. 118. The latter specifies those buildings of imperial Rome which had partly or wholly

which had no historical purpose. He never stayed long enough in Rome to make its ruins the subject of serious study.

What was the general aspect of the Eternal City which Petrarch surveyed in the first half of the fourteenth century? It has been drawn for us by a master-hand.[1]

"Rome resembled a huge field, encircled with moss-covered walls, with tracts of wild and cultivated land, from which rose gloomy towers or castles, basilicas and convents crumbling to decay, and monuments of colossal size, clothed with verdure; baths, broken aqueducts, colonnades of temples, isolated columns, and triumphal arches surmounted by towers; while a labyrinth of narrow streets, interrupted by rubbish heaps, led among these dilapidated remains, and the yellow Tiber, passing under broken stone bridges, flowed sadly through the ruined waste. Round the city, within the ancient walls of Aurelian, stood tracts of land, here waste, there cultivated, resembling country estates in their extent. . . . Baths and circuses were overgrown with grass, and were here and there absolutely marshy. Everywhere that the eye rested might be seen gloomy, defiant, battlemented towers, built out of the monuments of the ancients, with crenellated enceintes of most original form, constructed of pieces of marble, bricks and fragments of peperino. These were the castles and palaces of Guelf or Ghibelline nobles, who in the ruins on the classic hills sat thirsting for battle, as though Rome were not a city, but an open territory, the possession of which was to be disputed in daily warfare."

Of some, perhaps of several, of these nobles Petrarch was at this time an honoured guest—he who, ten years later, was to be by his pen the champion of Rome's freedom, the herald of a United Italy, still far in the future! We may see reason hereafter to condemn his conduct to his patrons at that date; but we must not forget that he had witnessed the horrors of intestine strife, and that he thought in 1347—wrongly, but not unnaturally—that his country was at the crisis of her fate.

It would be interesting to know, though we can only guess, in which of these frowning fortresses he was lodged. The chief

disappeared. Yet he had himself seen the ruins of seven out of twenty-five mentioned. The fourth passage is in *Ep. Metr.* II. 5 (to Clement VI.). It is merely an enumeration of Christian churches and relics; P. had evidently been warned not to deal with pagan Rome, which would have been beyond the Pope.

[1] Gregorovius (*op. cit.*), V. Part II. pp. 658–660.

stronghold of the Colonna in Rome was then [1] the Mausoleum of Augustus, on the northern side of the Campus Martius, and close to the Tiber; beside it the Via Flaminia (nearly identical with the present "Corso") proceeded south towards its extension, the Via Lata, and the Forum. It is a short, thick, squat tower, whose mediæval enceinte had entirely superseded its classical predecessor. Another, but less important, fortress of the family was on the Monte Citorio, farther down the same highway, near the Pantheon of Agrippa.[2] In the district of Trastevere (across the Tiber), near the Lungaretta, is still to be seen a square brick tower of the Counts of Anguillara, of which some massive pillars of the courtyard have survived. This district was dominated by the Orsini faction (then occupying the Vatican) to which some of the Anguillara family belonged. But, if Count Orso inhabited it, Petrarch may have stayed within it; for in a second letter to the Cardinal (dated March 23) he extols the character of the latter's two sisters, Agnes and Joanna, who were each married to a Count of Anguillara,[3] and whom he compares, in rather florid terms, to the most famous women of antiquity.[4] These ladies and their friends may have shared the mediæval keep, and acted jointly as his hostesses during part of his stay.

In his long peregrinations among the ruins of Rome he had, besides the Bishop, two companions to whom he afterwards sent reminiscences of their walks together. The first was Paolo Annibaldi, a Roman noble of the Colonna faction in the prime of life, whose family had a few years before expelled the Frangipani from the Colosseum and fortified it as their own stronghold. In 1335 Paolo had held office for a few months as one of the Rectors of the city by popular election; but he was not, as has been stated,[5] one of the Senators in the year of Petrarch's visit. The poet has

[1] It has been said that Barbarossa ejected the Colonna from this building in 1167, but, if so, they soon recovered it.

[2] The direction given by P. in *F.* VI. 2 (*v. inf.*) would suit either of these fortresses.

[3] De Sade states (I. p. 110) that Joanna married in 1323 Pietro di Frangipane. If so, she soon became a widow and married again; for in 1343 she is described as "relict" of Dominic de Anguillara (Gregorovius, *op. cit.* VI. Part I. p. 204, n.).

[4] Within fourteen lines he mentions eighteen—ten Roman and eight foreign—with whose distinguishing virtues these ladies might vie. F. II. 15.

[5] De Sade, I. 327, who is followed by Fracassetti (*It.* V. 337). Gregorovius has shown the statement to be unfounded.

left a letter in Latin hexameters [1] recalling their joint rambles among the ruins and exhorting his friend, who had again attained to high office, to keep his promise to maintain peace between the factions and to check the constant spoliation of the remains of antiquity. On both these points Paolo had spoken to Petrarch with tears of shame and reprobation; and these sentiments, along with his "kind face," [2] had specially endeared him to his companion. The ravages which the nobles were daily committing among the ruins were not due merely to their own incessant feuds, but also to the depredations of the "marmorarii" in their employ, who, in order to supply their masters with material, tore away the marble facings from priceless buildings of antiquity and converted them into lime. The poem hints [3] that Paolo had already exerted his influence to stop this vandalism—presumably in the fortification of the Colosseum, the circuit of which, though partly in ruins, was then nearly complete, while now only a third of it remains. The date of the letter has been fixed by some in 1337, soon after the poet's departure [4]; but the mention of Paolo's office points rather to the autumn of 1341, when he was appointed Senator. Petrarch seems to accept, though unwillingly, the absurd claim of the family to be descended from Hannibal.[5] No other letter to this noble has been preserved; but we hear of him again nearly twenty years later, when a friend had reported to the poet that he had fallen dead of grief beside the body of his son. With his usual wealth of examples, Petrarch speaks severely of this want of fortitude, but says that he shall never recall him without a sigh.[6]

The other, and perhaps more frequent, companion was the old man Giovanni Colonna di San Vito, who had apparently not yet become a friar. We have a charming reminiscence of one of their walks in a letter written five or six years later.[7] The Baths

[1] *Ep. Metr.* II. 13.
[2] *Ibid.* ll. 1, 36, 37.
[3] LL. 29, 30.
[4] As Diana Magrini (*Epistole Metriche di F. P.*, Rocca Casciano, 1907, p. 115). She rightly considers it impossible (as some have suggested) that Paolo is addressed in the Canzone, "Spirto Gentil." P. says (*Ep. Metr.* II. 13, l. 23) that he had only "once seen" P. A.—a clear proof to my mind that the letter was written some time after 1337. P. A. may not have been in Rome in April, 1341.
[5] LL. 58, 67.
[6] *Var.* 32 (to Neri Morando).
[7] *F.* VI. 2.

of Diocletian, to which they directed their steps, were situated outside the inhabited part of the city, but within the Agger of Servius Tullius, on the top of the hill from which sprang the slopes of the Viminal and the Quirinal. Though then a grass-grown ruin, it must have been from its position one of the most imposing to be seen in Rome. The whole city lay stretched at its feet, intersected by the Tiber, with the wide horizons of the Campagna beyond. No such point of vantage—none at least so impressive in its majestic desolation—can now be obtained within the city walls. The spot is near the modern railway-station, and therefore is one of the busiest parts of modern Rome. Even the little of the ruin that now remains cannot be seen at a glance, so completely has it been absorbed by later buildings. The "tepidarium," which was said to have contained accommodation for 3000 bathers, was in the time of Pius IV., under the direction of Michael Angelo, converted into the nave of the great Carthusian Church of Sta. Maria degli Angeli. About sixty years earlier the ruin had been much damaged under Alexander VI.; but the greatest destruction took place later under Sixtus V. (1586, 1587), in the course of which 2,660,000 cubic feet of masonry were broken up. The area covered by the original baths is said to have been 130,000 square metres (about thirty-two and a half acres), but there were doubtless open spaces within the circuit. In the ninth century inscriptions could still be seen on some of the stones [1]; nor had there probably been much change in the intervening five centuries, for none of the nobles had used the massive ruin as a fortress.

I quote the earlier part of the above-mentioned letter in order to illustrate Petrarch's feelings in the city which claimed to be the metropolis of Christendom, as it had been of the ancient world.

"You and I were taking a walk together in Rome. You know my peripatetic habit. I like it; it is entirely suited to my temperament and character. Of philosophic doctrines some please me and others displease, for I love not sects, but the truth. And so I am at one moment a Peripatetic, at another a Stoic, occasionally an Academic, but often none of the three—whenever I come upon anything that is, or may seem to be, opposed to the true and blessed faith. For we are allowed to love and approve the sects of philosophers, if they do not vary from the truth, if

[1] So we learn from the Einsiedlen Itinerary (quoted in Lanciani, *Destruction of Ancient Rome*, p. 153).

they do not divert us from our supreme purpose ; yet when any of them shows such a tendency—be he Plato or Aristotle or Varro or Cicero—they are to be frankly and firmly spurned and trampled on. No skill in disputation, or smoothness of speech, or authority of great names is to affect us. They were *men*, and as far as human research could go, they were fortunate in possessing knowledge and eloquence and natural genius, and yet miserable in being deprived of the One Supreme and Ineffable Object ; and as men who trusted in their own strength and did not seek the true Light, they often slip, often stumble, like the blind. Therefore we are so to admire their genius as to venerate its Author, so to compassionate their errors as to give thanks for the grace which is ours ; and we are to recognize that without any merit of our own we have been freely honoured and preferred to our ancestors by Him Who has deigned to reveal to babes the secrets which He conceals from the wise. In fine, we are so to philosophize as to ' love wisdom ' which the word ' philosophy ' implies. For Christ is the True Wisdom of God ; and if we are to philosophize truly, we must first of all love and worship Him. In everything that we are or do we are to be Christians before all. We are to read philosophy, poetry or history in such fashion that the echo of Christ's gospel, by which alone we are wise and happy, may be ever sounding in our hearts—that gospel, without which the more we have learnt, the more ignorant and wretched shall we be ; to which, as the highest citadel of truth, all things must be referred ; on which alone, as the firm foundation of sound letters, all human toil is built. Upon this, if we studiously amass other doctrines not contrary to it, we shall be free from blame ; for although perhaps they may add little to ' the root of the matter,' they will surely bring delight to the mind and a more cultured habit of life. This I have said incidentally, as the occasion offered. To return—we were wandering together in that mighty city, which, though from its extent it seems empty, has an immense population not merely in it but all around it [1] ; and at every step we encountered food for musing and for conversation."

Then follows an enumeration of seventy-seven spots—with associations legendary, historical and ecclesiastical—which he had visited in his Roman rambles. He could not have seen them all in one day ; and we must suppose that he is drawing either on his retentive memory or on some notes made during the weeks of his stay. Some of them bear traces of *Mirabilian* legend [2] ;

[1] Gregorovius (Vol. VI. Part II. p. 731) considers this statement an exaggeration. Elsewhere (Vol. VI. Part I. p. 152, n.) he estimates the population of this period as 50,000. But perhaps P. might consider this " immense " ; he had seen no other great cities but Bologna, Venice and Paris.

[2] Notably in the words " hic triumphavit, hic periit," implying that

while others, which required a closer acquaintance with history than the average Roman possessed, may have been the fruit of his own imaginative conjecture. It would be an interesting illustration of Roman tradition if the two sources could be separated; but even if this were possible, it would involve pages of annotation, and the task belongs properly to the Roman antiquarian. Petrarch himself begins, after two pages, to repent of his own temerity:

"What am I trying to do? Can I describe Rome for you on this small sheet? Assuredly, if I could, there is no need. You know it all, not so much as a Roman citizen, but as one who has been most inquisitive in such matters from early youth. For who are more ignorant to-day of the sights in Rome than her own citizens? I say it with reluctance, but nowhere is Rome less known than in Rome itself. . . . Who can doubt that Rome would know herself, if she could be raised from the dust? But this is no time for such complaints. After the fatigue of wandering over the immense circuit of the city, we used often to stop at the Baths of Diocletian; sometimes we even climbed on to the vaulted roof of that once magnificent building, for nowhere is there a sweeter air, a wider prospect, or more silence and desirable solitude. There we had no talk of business or of domestic matters, or even of the Republic, on which we had shed tears enough; as we sat there, or walked over the crumbling walls of the city, the fragments of its ruin were under our very eyes. Our conversation often turned on history, which in a measure we shared between us—I being allowed to be better versed in ancient, you in modern lore. (Those things I call 'ancient,' which took place before the name of Christ was celebrated and adored by the Roman Emperors, while the 'modern' are from that time to the present). We talked much of that part of philosophy, which is called moral —sometimes, too, of the beginnings of the arts and their first inventors. One day, when we were on that subject, you bade me explain clearly my view of the origin of the liberal and mechanical arts, of which I had spoken several times. I gladly complied with your wishes, for the hour and the place and the freedom from petty cares moved me to talk at some length, and your attention showed that you were much interested. I protest, however, that I said nothing new or original or even borrowed from others, for everything we learn becomes our own, until failure of memory

Cæsar was murdered in the Capitol. See *Mirabilia U. R.* (*ed. cit.*) Pt. III. Chap. VII. p. 90 (as a late echo of this, cf. *Hamlet*, Act III. Sc. 2, play-scene). In his *Life of Cæsar* (Razzolini's ed., Bologna, 1874, III. p. 684) P. places Pompey's Curia, where the tragedy took place, "at the side of the Tarpeian rock," which is of course incorrect.

robs us of it. You now request me to repeat and put down on paper what I said on that day. I confess that I said much which I could not say again if I were to try, in the same words. Give me back the place, the day, the leisure, your rapt attention, the same vein of thought, and I would do what I could. But all is changed; the place, the day, the leisure are gone; instead of your face, I behold but dumb letters. The noise of business I am neglecting thunders in my ears, and hinders reflection, though I should be glad enough to escape from it in order to reply more freely. . . . But the subject needs more than a single day and the limits of a letter. It requires a book, which I should not attempt, even if greater cares were no obstacle, till fortune has restored me to my solitude. There, and nowhere else, am I my own property, and so is my pen, which is now in open revolt, and trusting to my troublesome occupations, rebels against my commands. It has plenty to do when I am at leisure, and so it profits by my business to do nothing, and like a bad and disobedient servant, gets relaxation from its master's toil."

Petrarch has left two other reminiscences of this Roman sojourn, which illustrate its more domestic side. They both concern the old hero Stefano Colonna, who treated him with as much affection as if he had been a son.[1] One day the younger members of the family were engaged in some equestrian sports—perhaps in the open space of the Mausoleum of Augustus—while the old man, who was then nearly eighty, was watching them from a window. They seem to have been practising for a joust by tilting against a wall or some hard substance with light wooden lances, intended only for such practice. The test of skill was to shiver the lance; and one resisted the efforts of all so that they could not even bend it, to the no small amusement of the veteran, who mocked at their fruitless attempts. The younger Stefano was nettled and cried out: "It is easy enough, father, for an old man to sit at ease in a window and jeer at our present toil, while he praises the deeds of the past." His father at once came down into the yard, saying, "You won't believe, then, that we were men?" and mounting the first horse that came to hand, shivered the lance into fragments at the first attempt. Petrarch mentions the feat, which he witnessed himself, as an extraordinary instance of strength maintained into a hale old age.[2]

It would have been well for the Colonna if they could have

[1] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. 6).
[2] *Sen.* XII. 2 (to Giovanni of Padua in 1370).

confined their energies to such harmless pastimes. For some years Rome had been kept in a ferment by the hostilities between the factions; and it was perhaps in an endeavour to keep the peace that the Bishop of Lombez was now spending seven years at Rome.[1] He at least thought that the conduct of his family was sometimes provocative, and he ventured to remonstrate with his father on his appetite for strife. The old man was much offended, and for some time showed his displeasure, openly refusing all attempts at intercession. It must have been a delicate position for Petrarch; and one evening, when walking alone with the old man, he tactfully introduced the subject and begged him to be reconciled with his son. The poet has so clearly described the exact spot where this conversation took place that it can be identified within a yard or two to-day. They had walked down the Via Lata (now the southern end of the Corso) and had paused at a point where a road, descending from the Quirinal to the Tiber, crossed their street and passed under the Arch (now swept away) known in the Middle Ages as the Arch of Camillus.[2] As they stood there, leaning against an old marble tomb, Petrarch pressed his request, and at length his intercession prevailed. Though writing more than ten years later,[3] he says that he can remember the very words which the veteran used in yielding:

"'Your friend, my son, whom you urge me to treat with a father's love, has spoken against my old age in terms from which it would have been more to his honour to have refrained. But, since I cannot deny this request of yours, let there be a forgetting —aye, what is called an amnesty—for all that is past. After to-day, you will detect no trace of my displeasure, even in a word. One thing I must mention, which I would have you remember for ever. In the first place I am charged with involving myself in more war than is fitting at my time of life, and also with being ready to leave a heritage of hatred and discord to my sons. I call God to witness that it is only love of peace which impels me to war. My great age, the cooling of my spirit in this hard frame and

[1] *F.* IV. 12.

[2] The Arch of Camillus formerly spanned the street now called Via Pie' del Marano from the north-west corner of the present convent of St. Marta. The cross-street which led to it descends from the Monte Cavallo, joins the Corso at the Palazzo Salviani and leaves it by the ancient Church of Sta. Maria in Via Lata.

[3] *F.* VIII. 1 (consolatory letter to old Stefano on the Cardinal's death), dated September 9, probably 1348.

a long experience of misfortune have made me eager for rest. But with me it is a maxim, firm and fixed, never to shirk toil. I should prefer a quieter life, but if fate will have it so, I will go down fighting to my grave rather than learn servitude in my old age. As for what they say about the heritage, this is my one answer—look at me and take it direct—Would that I could leave any inheritance to my sons! But to my grief, fate has decreed otherwise, for, inverting the order of nature, I shall be the heir of all my sons.' With these words you turned away your eyes, which were wet with tears. I cannot tell whether it was from a presentiment or from some divine warning that you said this. . . . My recollection of it is so strong that I seem to see now that old marble tomb at the corner on which we were both leaning and the expression of your face,[1] and to hear your very words with these ears."

As we shall see in the sequel, this letter was not written till the mournful prophecy had been fulfilled. At the moment Petrarch thought it merely the effect of strong emotion, induced by the last glow in the embers of the old man's wrath; but as the lives of his five sons dropped one by one, the presage was recalled, and even repeated to the Cardinal, who was the last survivor.

On two extant manuscripts which Petrarch bought during this visit are recorded, as was his wont, the date of purchase—March 6 and 16. He may have bought others which have perished; but it is curious that these had nothing to do with his favourite studies, but contained ecclesiastical works, such as sermons, the life of St. Clement, and a commentary of St. Augustine on the last fifty Psalms. The devotional character of these works has excited comment,[2] but it should be noted that both purchases were made in Lent.[3] The last Roman date we have is that of the last letter to the Cardinal—March 23. But Petrarch's stay must have been much longer than three weeks; and, as Easter in this year fell as late as April 20, it is probable that, like so many travellers in the centuries to come, he postponed his departure till after the great festival.

Nor is anything certainly known about his return journey.

[1] The Paris MS. has the reading "oris," which is better than Fracassetti's "omnem."

[2] P. de Nolhac (*op. cit.* I. p. 41), who says he was tempted by the beauty of the MSS., and G. Finzi (*Petrarca*, 1900), p. 24.

[3] These MSS. are now in the National Library at Paris; the latter contains on a flyleaf a meditation in the poet's hand on sin and repentance.

But de Sade [1] has filled the gap by imagining, from some expressions in a poetic letter to the Bishop written in the next year, that he went by sea through the Straits of Gibraltar, round the coasts of Spain and Western France to the British Channel, or at least the French coast, which borders it. This view rests on a misunderstanding of the poem, of which I give a verse translation at the end of this chapter. Petrarch does not mention Spain at all; still less does he say, as has been asserted,[2] that he had "seen Mt. Atlas." He declares in poetic periphrasis that he had seen "the Atlantic":

> "That Ocean saw me, where the weary Sun
> Bathes in the western foam his smoking steeds,
> Whence he, forthlooking towards the mountain-top,
> Turned into stone by hard Medusa's eye,
> Casts a long shadow from its cliffs, and hides
> The shuddering Moors in fast-approaching night." [3]

To his friend Tommaso Caloria he addressed a letter [4] from the shores of "the Britannic Ocean" on the vexed question of the identity of the island of Thule; and in his collection this letter immediately succeeds those which he penned from Rome. By the "Britannic Ocean" he ought to mean—according to classical geography, which he had deeply studied—the British Channel; but there is no need to conclude, as some have done,[5] that he actually crossed it and visited England. If he had ever been in England or Spain, there would assuredly have been some trace of it in his later writings.

The long sea-voyage is a fact in itself most improbable. It was only at the beginning of the fourteenth century that Venetian and Genoese galleys, trusting to an improved mariner's compass, began to use this route in conveying the produce of the East to the marts of London and Flanders. These commercial ventures were probably still in the main coasting voyages, though the ship did not necessarily put into port every night, as was often done in the Northern Mediterranean, where good harbours abounded.[6]

[1] I. p. 335. He has been followed by Baldelli, Fracassetti, and many recent biographers.

[2] In Mr. Hollway-Calthrop's excellent book, pp. 79, 80.

[3] *Ep. Metr.* I. vii. ll. 74–79, translated in two parts—after this chapter and in Chap. XIII.

[4] *F.* III. 1—translated (with *F.* III. 2) at the end of this chapter.

[5] As Fuzet (*op. cit.*), p. 103.

[6] The custom seems to be reflected in the beautiful Canzone IV. ("Nella Stagion"), ll. 43–45.

They would therefore occupy a long time ; passengers for the whole distance (unless they were seamen) would be practically unheard of ; and no man would visit the Channel by that route, except for a definite destination or at the call of urgent business. When it is added that Petrarch, who was notoriously a bad sailor, felt for the sea a horror " bordering on the comic," [1] the possibility of his taking so long a voyage seems sufficiently remote.

Are we therefore to conclude that Petrarch returned from Rome direct to Avignon, and that the story of extended travel in this year has no foundation ? Those who take this view [2] reduce the poetic letter above mentioned—one of the best of his Latin works—to a fairy tale ; they also become involved in great difficulties of date with regard to the letter about Thule. The question is fully discussed in a Note below ; and, on the grounds there stated, I conclude that the poet this summer took what he rhetorically describes as a long journey to " the end of the earth " [3] and the bounds of the ocean,[4] but which really was entirely confined to the " broad lands " of France. De Sade long ago suggested that he made use of this opportunity to take personal possession of the canonry at Lombez, to which he had been appointed two years before ; and Koerting, who was the first to raise doubt about the sea-voyage, sensibly conjectures [5] that Bishop Giacomo, who had been four years absent from his diocese, gave him some commission to the clerical functionaries there. Before discharging it, he may have paid a short visit to Avignon and obtained the Cardinal's consent ; for there is no need to suppose, with the German writer, that he so far overcame his dislike to the sea as to cross by ship to Barcelona and traverse the high passes of the Pyrenees.[6] The poem gives no hint of so arduous a journey. But it does distinctly imply that *from Lombez* he journeyed north

[1] B. Zumbini (*Studi sul Petrarca*, 1895), p. 54. He cites the passage about the storm at Naples in 1343 in *F.* V. 5 (to the Cardinal, Frac. I. 270), where P. says that neither for the Cardinal nor for the Pope nor for his own father, if he were alive, would he go to sea again. He adds, " I leave the air to the birds, the sea to the fishes ; as a land animal, I will journey by land." Yet Zumbini himself (p. 11, n.) strangely repeats the fabled journey to Spain and England.

[2] P. de Nolhac, I. p. 38, and Finzi, pp. 24, 25.

[3] *F.* III. 2 (Frac. I. 142).

[4] *Secret*, p. 404 (Bâle ed.).

[5] Koerting (*op. cit.*), p. 123.

[6] P. says (ll. 72, 73 of the translation below) that he saw these mountains —or rather that they saw him ; but, as we have seen, they are visible from Lombez.

by land to a bleak and barren country on the shores of the British Channel; and it is highly probable that from thence he indited to his Sicilian friend the prose letter on Thule, which some critics have arbitrarily referred to 1333.

Neither this letter nor the poem gives any details of the journey; but the country which best suits the description is some part of Brittany—preferably the sea-coast, near the Baie de St. Michel. On his motive for so long a ride it is useless to speculate; some Breton friend made in Paris or at Lombez may have invited him to his home. The route taken would be by Bordeaux, La Rochelle—where he would see "the Atlantic"—and Nantes to Rennes; and he would have returned through Central France by Angers, Tours and Clermont without revisiting Paris, which would be out of his way. I admit that this journey rests merely upon conjecture; but beyond the ordinary hardships of travel, there would be no special difficulty about it for a young and active man. The merit of the suggestion, if it has any, is that it affords the least violent explanation of Petrarch's positive statements; and the objection that he has left but scanty notices of so important a journey seems scarcely conclusive. What we do know is that he was again in Avignon on August 16, 1337; that the return of his love-melancholy increased his already strong dislike of the city; and that for this and other reasons he retired in a few weeks to Vaucluse, the place of his boyish admiration.

NOTE TO CHAPTER IX

On Petrarch's Travels in 1337 *on returning from Rome*

The prose letters (*F.* III. 1 and 2) and the poetic letter to Giacomo Colonna (*Ep. Metr.* I. vii.) translated below, are the crucial letters, which bear upon the vexed question of the extent of Petrarch's travels in this year. The two prose letters are the most important; for the verse letter is so obscure and (in some places) rhetorical that it needs corroboration from other sources. For the reasons stated in the last chapter I concur with Koerting in believing that the long sea-voyage did not take place; but I am almost sure that in assigning the two prose letters (*F.* III. 1 and 2) to the journey of 1333, he has allowed his scepticism to run away with him.[1] If they do not belong to that

[1] M. de Nolhac (*P. et l'Hum.* I. 38, n. 2) supports Koerting's conjecture that the date of August 18 for *F.* III. 2 indicates the year 1333,

year, the only date to which they can possibly be referred is 1337; and then the ancient interpretation of the poetic letter, so far as it refers to extended travels in France in that year, finds strong support. Unfortunately, owing to the fact that Petrarch, in editing the prose letters in 1359, made extensive insertions in them, absolute proof on the subject is hardly possible. I have indicated by italics in my translation the single sentence in *F.* III. 1 which is incontestably a later insertion.[1] But Koerting's suggestion that anything written after 1333 must be a later addition is utterly uncritical, and really begs the whole question, which is this—Does the letter, with the exception of the words italicized, show traces of having been "touched up"?

I have examined it with the utmost care, and I am certain that the idea of a "touching up"[2] is quite inadmissible, and that, if the letter belongs to 1333, it must have been entirely rewritten. It runs smoothly throughout; and if the allusions to Richard of Bury and to the work of Giraldus are taken out, barely a third of the letter would be left. But if the letter is to be taken as it stands (*i.e.* with only four lines omitted), there are strong reasons for thinking that it cannot belong to 1333.

I must add that Petrarch's assertion that his references to classical authorities about Thule are entirely from memory would be most disingenuous, if he had rewritten the letter with those authorities beside him. This objection, I admit, is by no means fatal; for we know from other examples[3] that he allowed himself great licence in editing the letters. Obviously no critic can pronounce definitely whether a letter has or has not been *rewritten;* but in a case where Petrarch cannot be found guilty of falsely drawing attention to his wonderful memory, it is fair to give him the benefit of the doubt.

It remains for me to state my reasons for thinking that *F.* III. 1, as it stands (the italicized words excepted) must have been written both after 1333 and also before the death of Caloria in 1341. If the

because the journey of that year was nearing its close at the beginning of August. But this may be merely a chance coincidence; summer is the usual season for travel.

[1] I have also placed within brackets a long passage towards the end of the letter, which *may* have been inserted in 1359, but this does not affect in any way the question of the date of the original letter. In that passage Petrarch refers specifically to Pliny, Servius and Mela. His own copy of Pliny was bought at Mantua in 1350, and he says in 1352 (*F.* XII. 5) that no one at Avignon possessed Pliny, except the Pope. But his knowledge of the Pope's copy perhaps implies that he had previously studied it. His quotation from Servius is exact, as far as it goes; but it omits an interesting detail, and this was undoubtedly among his books. Mela is not in his early Catalogue (before 1337, see Chap. XXXIV.), but he is alluded to in *F.* III. 1, and may also have been studied at the Papal library.

[2] Koerting, p. 124, "Ueberarbeitung." The date which he gives for Richard's episcopate (December, 1333) is that of his consecration, not his appointment.

[3] Cf. Frac. App. VI. (the original) with the letters *F.* VIII. 2–5 expanded from it.

letter is to be taken as an honest production of Petrarch's early "Wanderjahre," the whole matter hinges on the date of his meeting Richard de Bury at Avignon. De Sade [1] fixes this in the last months of 1331 (when Richard went upon his first embassy from King Edward to the Pope) and asserts that his second embassy of 1333 took place when Petrarch was on his northern tour, so that in that year they did not meet. I think I can show that this assertion is mistaken, and that they did meet, or at least could have met,[2] after his return from that tour, and I can also give reasons for supposing that the meeting referred to in the letter must have been during the second embassy.[3] Petrarch himself states, in the interpolated passage, that he made the acquaintance of Richard, "when the first seeds of discord between France and England were shooting up." This would apply to 1333—when the renewed war with Scotland threatened trouble with France, her old ally—but not to 1331, when Edward III., after much delay, had just yielded full homage to Philip VI. It is probable that Richard's mission was to convince the Pope of the serious provocation offered by Scotland, and to prevent any proposal for mediation on the part of France. The embassy of 1331—which was much shorter, so that Petrarch had less chance of making his acquaintance—probably had some connexion, as de Sade supposes, with Edward's imprisonment of his mother.

Again, if the first mooting of the question of Thule had taken place in 1331, Petrarch would have sought out his faithless "promiser" in 1333, and requested an answer to his neglected letters; and his impatience must have been great indeed, if he wrote several letters in the short interval of sixteen months. It is far more likely that his first interest in the Thule question was aroused during his tour of 1333, and that finding Richard at Avignon on his return, he put his poser to the learned Englishman, who, being nominated Bishop of Durham before the end of his journey and Chancellor in the following year,[4] found no time (or, as Petrarch hints, failed) to resolve his doubts. We know that the second embassy took place between the months of April and October; that Richard started after Easter [5] (which was April 4); and that he heard of the vacancy in the see of Durham when he had reached Paris on his return. Bishop Beaumont, his predecessor, died on September 28 [6]; and the King, who had determined that Richard should have the first vacant see, did not nominate him

[1] Vol. I. p. 167.

[2] Koerting states (p. 124) that "the second mission of Richard de Bury had already taken place in 1333." This might mean that the meeting took place just before Petrarch's tour, which is certainly incorrect (see below).

[3] Segrè, *Studi Petrarcheschi*, p. 227, rightly comes to this conclusion, though apparently not aware of all the arguments in its favour.

[4] He only held the post nine months—till June 6, 1335. I suspect that the true reading in *F.* III. 1 ("Ricardo *quondam* cancellario") is "quodam."

[5] *Calendar of Patent Rolls* (7 Edw. III.), Pt. I. p. 421. The date is given as April 7.

[6] The exact date is doubtful. Some authorities say 22nd, others 24th.

till October 14. The news would therefore probably not reach Paris till late in that month; and if we allow a week for his journey to Paris and a fortnight for his stay there, he would not have left Avignon till October. As Petrarch must have started soon after Easter and rejoined his patron before the end of August,[1] there would have been ample time for his intercourse with Richard after his return.

But might not Petrarch's letter to Caloria (III. 1) have been written on his northern tour, but not dispatched till after his return, when he added the first part of the passage about Richard? This supposition seems precluded by the expression in III. 2,[2] in which he seems plainly to allude to the previous letter as having been written *inde*, that is, "from" (not merely "in") the "extrema terrarum," which he has just visited. I have proved that the last part of the passage about Richard must have been written after 1333; and it is not likely that the exact allusion to Richard's bishopric as "newly[3] conferred upon him" was an addition of twenty-six years later. The whole passage gives the impression of having been written a few, but not many, years after the meeting with Richard; and the vague phrase "after some years" (*post annos*) by which Petrarch dates his acquisition of Giraldus' book, need not mean a long period. Indeed it cannot mean that, unless the last sentence is mere pretence; for after citing Giraldus' statements about Thule, he tells his correspondent (who died in 1341), "Examine for yourself the witnesses whom he calls, and see if they agree with his account, and you will then know what credit is to be attached to their words." If this sentence was written in good faith—*i.e.* when the letter was composed—and not as a mere device to cover up a later insertion, then Koerting and de Nolhac are clearly wrong in their hypothesis that *F.* III. 1 and 2 belong to 1333.

The above considerations go far to strengthen the argument from the position of these letters in the collection, which, by itself perhaps, would not be conclusive. Petrarch expressly says in his Preface that in arranging the letters he had mainly followed the chronological order. If *F.* III. 1 and 2 were written, as he could hardly fail to remember, only nine days after *F.* I. 4 and 5, they ought to have been placed in the first Book; whereas they stand immediately after the last letter from Rome, which is dated March 23 (undoubtedly in 1337).

We can now see the importance of the allusions in *Ep. Metr.* I. vii., which are not free from poetic exaggeration, to more extended travels in 1337. Apart from this letter, we should know absolutely nothing

[1] *F.* I. 4 is dated August 9, but Petrarch tells his patron that he shall remain there awhile till the excessive heat has ceased and the weariness from his long ride has passed away. This may mean no more than a week, and the boat journey would not exceed three days.

[2] Although Koerting denies it, the close relation between the two letters appears indisputable.

[3] The word "noviter" clearly shows that Petrarch knew of this appointment and (generally speaking) of its date—soon after Richard left Avignon. It also shows (as against de Sade) that the appointment took place soon after the promise to Petrarch, and therefore that the latter was made in 1333, not in 1331.

about Petrarch's return from Rome in that year; and the difficulties which we have just been considering, would be almost, if not quite, insoluble. But these allusions, though vague, undoubtedly point to journeys in the west and north, which occurred *after* his Italian journey; and before he comes to these travels, there are two separate passages which expressly state that his love-smart had lasted ten years.[1] In his criticism of this letter [2] Koerting wavers most unaccountably between the view which I have taken in the text (except as to the Brittany journey) and a downright denial of any more extended travels in 1337.[3] If the journey to the west may mean a new journey to Lombez, as he suggests, why should not the journey to the north mean a new journey to the shores of the Channel? The word "hinc" (l. 76) which Koerting arbitrarily describes as "a mere flourish," distinctly implies that the latter was an extension of the former journey; and given time and a sufficiency of money, there was little more difficulty then in a tour from Gascony into Brittany and back to Avignon through Central France than there would have been a hundred years ago. I may add that the two expressions, "Britannici Oceani litora" (*F.* III. 1), and "usque ad Oceani terminos" (*Secretum*, p. 404), seem to me much more suited to this region than to the coast of Picardy or the (even then) populous shores of Flanders. We must not forget (as critics too often do) that the sources for Petrarch's geography were exclusively classical. When he speaks of the "Britannicus Oceanus," he means—as Pliny meant—the English Channel; he cannot mean any point east of the Straits of Dover (Fretum Gallicum), for such point would not be on the shores of the British, but the German Ocean ("Germanicus Oceanus," Plin. IV. 30). Moreover in the letter about Thule (*F.* III. 1) he lays stress upon the fact that it was in the extreme west as well as the extreme north; and yet he says he had just been travelling to the shores of the Ocean nearest to it. He knew quite well that the shores of the Netherlands were not in the extreme west; therefore north-western France is the only district which suits the language employed. I may add, however, that though we have no complete itinerary of the northern journey in 1333, there is no evidence that Petrarch visited any place on the shores of either the Channel or the North Sea.[4] His journey from Paris to Ghent would take him through Amiens or Arras to Lille and Courtrai and thence to Ghent; and after leaving that place he was travelling away from the sea. Moreover we know that on this tour, at least as far as Liège, he had friends with him [5]; but on

[1] L. 44, "Jam duo lustra," and l. 53, "dominam pepulisse decenni Hospitio."

[2] Koerting, pp. 119–125.

[3] De Nolhac (see note 1, p. 351) appears to take the latter view.

[4] He writes from Aix on June 21, having spent "no small time" in Paris and then traversed Picardy and the chief towns in Flanders, of which Ghent and Liège are mentioned (*F.* I. 3 and *Sen.* XVI. 1). He left Cologne on the 25th, passed through the Ardennes, and was at Lyons on August 9.

[5] *Sen.* XVI. 1, "Comites." These were not (all of them at least) mere "compagnons de voyage," for such a companion would hardly have been capable of helping him to transcribe Ciceronian manuscripts, and he expressly calls his helper in that task "amicus."

the northern journey, spoken of in the verse letter, he expressly says that he was alone (*Ep. Metr.* I. vii. l. 77, "*solus eo*").

Again, in the letters describing the 1333 tour, not a word is said about the strangeness of the language heard in France and the Netherlands, probably because, at least in the towns where Petrarch made his longest stay, the French, or Langue d'Oïl, was spoken in its purity; but the two letters whose date is disputed (*F.* III. 1 and *Ep. Metr.* I. vii.) speak in almost identical terms of the peculiar speech of the natives, which is exactly what we should expect in the north-western provinces. The description of the country in the poetic letter as too cold to grow wine is regarded by Koerting as "hyperbole," and so it is, if applied to Picardy or Southern Belgium, but not if it refers to Brittany. At the present time there are some vineyards, but in Heylin's *Cosmography* (1674—more than three hundred years after Petrarch) it is said to be "destitute of wine"[1]; and there is no reason to suppose that in this quarter the zone of vineyards then stretched farther north.

It is true that in his fragment of autobiography (*Ep. Post.*) Petrarch makes no mention of these extended travels; and after alluding to his visit to Rome, he simply says that "inde reversus" he betook himself to Vaucluse. But this omission need excite no surprise. His reminiscences are desultory and do not profess to be exhaustive. He gives no particulars of the tour of 1333, except the visit to Paris; and then—with an agile leap over four years—he says that "inde reversus" he departed for Rome. He has nothing whatever to say of his embassy to Naples in 1343, or of his excursions in that neighbourhood, or of his support of Rienzi.

[1] *Cosmography*, Part I. p. 167.

LETTERS

F. I. 5.

F. P. to Giacomo Colonna, Bishop of Lombez.

"I was returning from Germany and had already reached Lyons, recalled by your entreaties and my own eagerness, and travelling not at the pace of a poet or naturalist, but with the haste of a courier. My speed has been vexatiously checked by the unexpected news that, taking advantage of my absence, you have fled away and gone to Rome without me, which you promised you would never do. What am I to say? Can anything be more wretched than a lover whose love is not returned? In what fashion or language can I tackle you? Am I to think you mistrustful or disdainful of your friends, when nothing is less like your character? Or forgetful, when I have marvelled at your memory? Or a breaker of engagements,[1] whose good faith is notorious? You must describe the offence yourself, and pass sentence of condemnation or acquittal at your own tribunal. So take your seat there, and discuss it with me for a while on equal terms. For love equalizes the unequal; and so, if perchance your tongue has pronounced against me, I will appeal to your conscience. Answer then the question of my grief, Why are you in Rome and I in Gaul? What have I done to deserve such divorce? Am I thrown away like a useless and disagreeable package? Of my usefulness you must be the judge; of the other quality—for grief must claim its liberties—I give my own opinion; which is, if I know you aright, that you have none more agreeable, or more suited to your cares. I say it with the good leave of my Lælius and of the rest, to whom I am emboldened to compare myself through disappointment and envy at their high fortune. I have preferred you to the whole world; to whom, I pray, do you not prefer me? Were you afraid that I should let out your secrets to the common herd? Have you found me so leaky, of a character so weak and light, that I should betray your easy confidence? Then you have acted imprudently, for you have often placed weighty matters in my hands. But since to-day grief overcomes my

[1] Fracassetti has "fidefragum" (a non-existent word); the "fœdifragum" of the Paris MS. is a far better reading.

modesty, credit me, best of fathers, when I say that I am second to no one within my knowledge for discreet silence. None could accuse me of blabbing, or call me unsuited—I say not, for faithful friendship, but for the rank of a senator or for the priesthood of Ceres.[1] Among the Persians we read that nothing was more sacred than good faith, or fairer than silence, or more disgusting than loquacity; and so they would give their life for the second, and punish the third by death. None of them for any conceivable punishment would reveal their king's secrets; or if any one did so, there was no penalty too heavy for him. An admirable rule, for what can be easier than to hold one's tongue, or for what great affairs is he fitted, who cannot do a thing so simple?

"Is it your reason that you were unwilling to interrupt my employments? Then what has been the good of our long acquaintance? You don't seem to know that I am not of those who, as Horace [2] says:

> 'Are brave to aim at much in shortest time
> And rush to bask beneath another sky';

or in Virgil's words [3]:

> 'Who haunt the courts and thresholds of the great,'

who tear their soul to tatters, smile at one man, serve another, love no one whole-heartedly, and never utterly trust any. No doubt I am ignorant of myself, for we are greatly deceived in our judgment of our own things; but I try hard to be of those who wish for nothing and have no great expectations; I am aware that those who conform themselves to few are disliked by many. So far my hopes and employments have been placed on you; and if you no longer suffered me to be mistaken in this, I should admit it was very kindly done if you let me see your estrangement not by any insulting act or rough word or haughty air, but by silent flight. But if you meant to test or to inflame my longing, you should not employ a jest too sharp upon a mind so feeble.

"Perhaps, however, your reason was a more considerate one; I fancy you wanted to spare me exertion, fearing I might be unequal to sea-sickness, or might faint under the summer sun, as the journey before you lay through 'a thirsty Apulia.' [4]

[1] The allusion seems to be to the mysteries of Deneter (Ceres) at Eleusis.

[2] Horace, *Odes*, II. xvi. 17, 18; the last line is from Whyte-Melville's translation.

[3] Virgil, *Georg.* II. 504.

[4] This is an allusion to Horace (*Epod.* III. 16). The Bishop's route did not lie through the real Apulia.

But I ask you, is not this judgment of yours injurious to my good name? When have I deserved such an opinion of me? When have I been broken down or dismayed by exertion? The mere delight in sight-seeing is taking me through unknown wilds—tell me, would not delicious necessity have drawn me through Italy? With what entreaties and blandishments did you urge me, if you care to remember, to be your comrade to the Pyrenees! though I confess that I followed with an eagerness even greater than that which carried me off. Why am I unworthy to be your companion among the Apennines, unless perhaps the former pilgrimage made my inertness too plain? And yet you used to wonder daily how it was that one born and nursed in literary ease showed such endurance of toil, especially as the season was unfavourable, the country wild, the way blocked with thorns and—what we minded most—the manners of the people rude and very different from ours. But perhaps—my reasoning may be gradually getting at the truth—I am not able to do what I could once. Time not only gives but takes away; it is now the fourth summer since that journey, and I am three years older—a time plainly long enough, not merely to change one's little mortal body, but to overthrow empires and cities. I am rallying you, you see; for a great distress sometimes relieves itself by jesting, when lamentations fail. I grant that every day is a step towards death; and puling infants in their cradles grow old as they grow in size. And yet I am not so old as to feel the natural decline, for I am not yet in my prime. I advance as my years increase, and become daily stronger both in mind and limb, though I know well what is coming. The higher a traveller mounts, the nearer he is to his descent; and if it be right to say so, he somehow goes down by going up. That is *my* case; but meanwhile I *am* ascending.

"If I am right in all this, you may have a proper excuse for what you have done; but I cannot find one, though I pant in the search. This alone is enough to show me the extent of my love; for it is the way with lovers to be stirred by an offence at first, but soon when they find their 'flame' as strong as ever, they resort to healing excuses, and the more keenly they feel the deed, the more they say either—if they can—that it has not been done, or has been done with a good intent. That is my aim—to seem to have been deserted justly—although, alas! I cannot persuade myself of it. And of course it may be that you neither wanted to hinder my departure, nor were able to wait for my return; and when you dismissed me sobbing from your embrace, you were unwilling to give me new ground for weeping. I would you had been unkinder; your consideration has had the opposite effect. Nothing hurts more than an unexpected foe, and grief misplaced is only the more grievous.

And so, if I could not be without tears, I should then have had more to weep for; it is more natural for tears to accompany departure than return. Let it be your first aim, I beg, to defend yourself with your abounding eloquence—never mind how truly, so long as it be plausibly. With him who is eager to believe no persuasion can fail. I can far more easily overlook your fault than my own ill-luck. Farewell and remember me.

"*Lyons.*

"*August* 9 (1333)."

F. III. 1.

F. P. to Tommaso da Messina.

"The man of talent, who goes on pilgrimage to the world of the ancients—hard, indeed, of approach, but delightful when you reach it—has many difficulties to overcome. The particular one which you say you have lately experienced has troubled me for a long time—like you, I am inquiring in what part of the world is the island of Thule—inquiring, but having neither certain guide nor plausible conjecture, I neither can find the island, nor have any hope of doing so. I am writing you this from the very shores of the Britannic Ocean, and so am nearer, according, to report, to the very island we are seeking—I write, therefore, from the very quarter where, either through the study of ancient books or from a new and careful examination of the region, I ought to be able to get some positive information. There is no doubt it is the farthest of lands; so says Virgil, so Seneca,[1] so Boethius who follows in their wake, so indeed the whole band of writers. This, too, is pretty well agreed among many—that it is situated in the west, at the greatest possible distance from the sun-rising and from the south. With us, who are placed in the west, its very proximity adds zest to the search; if it were in the east, we should be no more interested in Thule than in Taprobane. We know Britain and Ireland and all the Orcades in the north of the western ocean, and the Fortunate Islands in the south of it, partly by experience, partly by the constant testimony of travellers, almost as well as we know Italy itself or France.[2] And therefore we begin to look

[1] See the play of Medea (l. 375), "Nec sit terris ultima Thule."

[2] As regards the Canaries this statement is an exaggeration. P. says (*Vit. Sol.* II. p. 314, Bâle ed.) that a Genoese fleet reached them "memoriâ patrum," which would agree with the date (generally given) of 1291; in the same passage he refers to a description he had evidently heard of the inhabitants. Brown (*Madeira and the Canaries*, p. 47) says that the fleet "never returned," and Miss Du Cane (*The Canary Islands*, p. 163) says the result of its voyage was not known. If P. refers to his own father, neither statement can be correct. They were visited

round and wonder and inquire with the more care in what quarter of the waves rises this island, celebrated by all writers; for both the authority of the ancients and now, too, the opinion of eastern peoples and of the whole world have placed it in our ocean. So all I can say is that the fate of this island is just that of famous men, who are everywhere better known than in their own country.

"Ask the inhabitants of the west; the unlearned are ignorant of its very name, while to men of letters the name is certainly renowned, but the island is as unknown as it is to the vulgar. I had indeed some not unprofitable talk on this matter with Richard, the erstwhile [1] chancellor of the King of the English —a man of keen ability and not ignorant of letters; for he, born and bred in Britain and from his youth incredibly interested in recondite subjects, seemed the fittest of all men to unravel such questions. He replied that he would certainly satisfy my doubts, but not until he had returned into his country to his books, of which no man had a greater store. I know not whether this was because he really hoped so or that he was ashamed to confess his ignorance, as is the fashion with many to-day, who fail to see that no man can know everything, and that it is more modest to confess such ignorance, when it exists. Or possibly it may have been that he grudged me the knowledge of this mystery, though that I do not suspect. At the time I made his acquaintance he had left his country to transact the business of his master with the Apostolic See. *That was the period when the first seeds of the long war between his aforesaid master and the King of the French were shooting up, which afterwards yielded a bloody harvest; nor even yet is the sickle laid by or the barns closed.* But when that promiser of mine had departed—either because he could find nothing, or else preoccupied by the heavy weight of the pontifical office newly conferred upon him—although I often addressed letters to him, he rewarded my patience by nothing but an obstinate silence; and so, in spite of my British friendship, Thule remains as unknown to me as before.

"But after some years there came into my hands a little book on the Marvels of Ireland [2] by one Giraldus, a courtier of Henry II., King of the English—a composition rather light in its subject-matter, but put together with some skill. But one brief and painstaking passage in it, expressing doubts similar

by the French in 1330, and Portugal vainly tried to conquer them in 1334.

[1] I follow Fracassetti's text, but I suspect the true reading is "quodam," not "quondam."

[2] *Topographia Hiberniæ, sive de Mirabilibus Hiberniæ.* This was first printed at Frankfort in 1603, from a copy in Camden's library.

to my own, has induced me not to exclude it from my library,[1] and so a single intellectual point of contact has attracted me to the author. He cites the opinions of certain writers that, of the islands of the Ocean round Britain between north and west, Thule is the farthest; for there in summer there is no night, and at the winter solstice no day, and beyond it the sea lies sluggish and frozen. His witnesses for this are Solinus and Isidore[2]; and yet he asserts that the island is unknown to the west, and that there is none of this name or nature in that region. And so his conjecture is that either the island is fabulous (in spite of its fame), or that lying hid at an infinite distance from the rest, it can only be sought in the farthest recesses of the northern ocean; and to the latter view he says that Orosius subscribes. He might have added Claudian,[3] where he says:

'Thule, doomed 'neath the Polar star to lie,'

but omitting him, he comes to the above conclusion. Examine, then, for yourself the witnesses whom he calls, and see if they agree with his account, and you will then know how much credit is to be attached to his words.

"For I am now at the greatest distance from all my books, and that is the one thing that I find most troublesome in this tour. When I go out, I hear no whisper of a Latin tongue[4]; when I come home, I am without my comrade-books, with which it is my habit to talk; all my converse is with my memory. And this, too, I am writing on the spur of the moment and from memory, so that points on which I find the latter inclined to waver I pass over rather than commit to paper. I remember much indeed as clearly as if the books were beneath my eyes, but these are things which from my frequent pondering on them have left a deep and strong impression.

["Perhaps Giraldus had not read Plinius Secundus, for no one speaks more positively than he—with how much truth I should not dare to assert; for I am often haunted by the fact that an island so near and so celebrated should be so utterly

[1] It is not in his early catalogue (see Chap. XXXIV.). But as the date of that list may be about 1335, its purchase may have been subsequent, or perhaps (from his disparaging remarks) he did not consider it worth recording.

[2] It is an indication of early date that he does not quote Solinus and Isidore, as he could have done if he had rewritten the letter in 1359, for then they were both in his library.

[3] Claudian, *Ad Rufinum*, II. 240.

[4] I suspect that "lingua" is here to be taken literally and that the adjective refers to what we call "the Latin peoples." P. could not have expected to hear the dead language in the streets. If, as I maintain, he must have been on the outer British Channel, the language was Breton-Welsh.

unknown. The statement of Pliny I am referring to, in the second book of his *Natural History*,[1] is that Thule is an island distant six days' voyage from the north of Britain; and he conjectures, from arguments that seem to him overwhelming in their strength, that there is a six months' day there in summer and a winter day of the same length, besides citing the testimony of one Pytheas of Phocæan Massilia. But if this is true, what a little distance from here is this Thule which we are seeking, whose fame is great, I suppose, in India, though we have no knowledge of it! Servius indeed—a better grammarian than geographer or poet but following in the steps of the ancients—in commenting on that passage of Virgil, 'tibi serviat ultima Thule,' says: 'Thule is an island of the Ocean between the north and west, beyond Britain, Ireland and the Orcades.'[2] You see that all use nearly the same expression, but in various terms, and their views meet in the statement that it is between north and west and not far from Britain; though, if they had met there in the flesh, they might possibly have changed their views by the stern compulsion of facts.

"Two differ rather widely from the rest; but whether they get nearer the truth, or whether from distance their lie cannot, as men say, be 'grasped by the hand,' must be matter of doubt. Of these one is Orosius,[3] whom I mentioned just now; the other is Pomponius Mela, a noble geographer, whom Pliny, though usually following him, seems to have overlooked on this point. To the Hyperborean tribe he assigns but one rising of the sun in the whole year, and that at the vernal equinox, and but one setting at the autumnal, and so says that their year consists merely of a single day and a single night. He is the first to place them on the coast of Asia beyond Aquilo and the Rhiphæan chain, and describes them as the most harmless and happy of mortals. Thule he places among the islands of Ocean opposite the shores of the Belgæ; he says that, though dark in winter, the nights there are so short and bright in summer that at the solstice there is none. Among all these discrepancies truth seems as hard to light upon as the island itself; and so it is, for the knowledge that we seek with toil we can as well do without. We may let Thule remain shrouded in the north and the Nile-sources in the south, so long as between them virtue holds plain and steadfast on its way; while the path of this short

[1] Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* II. 77.

[2] Servius on *Georg.* I. 30. He adds (more correctly than Pliny and Mela) that when the sun is in Cancer (June 22 to July 23) Thule has no night.

[3] This is the only sign that the bracketed part was inserted later. He first quotes Orosius as if he had not read him and here as if he had; and he certainly possessed and used his work (De Nolhac, II. 240).

life, on which most men travel with weak and tottering steps, hurries them along in suspense to its close. So let us not spend too much trouble in looking for a place, which perhaps if we could find it, we should be only too glad to leave.]

"I must close this letter and spend my time more profitably. This is all I can manage to write to you on this doubtful place from the very area, as I told you, in which it is looked for. For further details consult the authorities; it shall be enough for me, if the knowledge of these mysteries and lurking-places be denied, to become acquainted with myself. On this I will turn my eyes and fix my gaze, and entreat my Creator to reveal Himself to me and also show me myself, so that, as a wise man ought to pray, I may be able to consider my latter end. Farewell."

F. III. 2.

F. P. to Tommaso da Messina.

"What am I to say to your letter? I fear the headlong torrent of human error has caught our friend in its whirlpool along with all the rest of the world. He grows old apace, as you see—the sport and mockery of fortune—promising himself much that I am sure he will never gain. Yet he has one excuse—that almost every one is attacked by the same complaint. Is there one who will not toil to-day in the hope of rest to-morrow? This is the felicity of our mortal life—a strange frenzy, not less so because universal, to gape at every wind and for the sake of uncertain things to reject certain good. Men little know what a gain it is to part with empty and delusive hopes; they are a heavy burden, yet so charmed are we with our peculiar ills, they are laid down with a sigh. So our friend toils and sighs and pants to no purpose. . . .

"I am not charging others with what I excuse in myself. I too have been carried over sea [1] and land by a longing to see the world; and now especially that pleasure has drawn me to the ends of the earth—or rather I have been driven from here by the tedium of life and by disgust at the morals of the place. I arrived the day before yesterday, hard necessity having forced me to return; and though I have written much to you on my travels, yet on my return it was to write your name first that I wiped my dusty pen. But that friend of yours leaves no frontier of the world unvisited, not that he may become wiser but more wealthy, and is tossed by every wind like a falling leaf. I predict that his complaints will only end with his life. Tell him

[1] The first sea-voyage (known to us) that P. took after his childhood was that of 1337 to Civita Vecchia. The journey of 1333, which some assert to be that of this letter, was entirely by land.

this from me—that men's plans seldom come to fruition, but suppose they do, misery is apt to increase along with success. A man of experience would hardly need to be persuaded of this, unless the folly of custom had deafened his ears to the voice of common sense. But leave him to look after himself; do you hold to your resolution and beware that a crowd of madmen do not make you swerve from it. It is a saying of Nature herself, as of Seneca, 'We need but little, and that not for long.' Farewell."

Ep. Metr. I. vii. 1–155.

To Giacomo Colonna, Bishop of Lombez.

"You would inquire my state, my way of life,
My daily occupations; and to you
The truth must out, for you and I are one.
Nothing I crave—not even fame; I rest
Content with what I have; receive this first.
With poverty—no mean or irksome guest—
My bargain's struck; let Fortune have all else,
Will she but leave my home and my sweet books;
Nay, let all go—since all are hers—for peace.
From her I ask no gifts of lands or wealth,
Like your good brother's—to the aspiring soul
These are but clogs and chains, source of all ill,
If but the Muse's gifts she leave untouched,
Nor vex my leisure, frugal and serene.
I envy none, to none feel desperate hate,
None but myself I scorn, although but now
I scorned all others and extolled myself.
So runs the world away! I know my heart
As ne'er before, unless deceived by dreams.
And yet, what boots it at the Muse's fount
My thirst to have slaked, if a yet fiercer thirst,
Evermore raging, burns within my breast?
What use, at ease in Heliconian glades,
To have oft made mirth at the mad toils of men,
Myself being racked with toil, sans pay, sans rest?
What good's a beauteous face with mind diseased?
My tongue lacks power to praise my God enough
For all the things which ought to make men blest;
And yet who lacks not some perennial care
Which gnaws for ever at the hapless breast?
And now I seem to see your cheeks bedewed
With gentle pity, for you have known me long;
And because, father-like, you would know all,
Love drives my pen, nor dare I check its course;
I'll speak, and trust your counsel may bring help;
'Tis sweet to ease the mind of its sore grief.—
—Deep in my mind there dwells a lady bright,
Of lineage high, for virtue well-renowned,
Through my love-songs far-famed in all the world;
Now on my view she thrusts herself, and fills

My soul with fear, nor wills to leave her throne.
Long by no arts but sweet desire to please
And by rare beauty had she won my heart;
For twice five years I had borne the heavy chain
About my neck, indignant that so long
A woman's yoke should sway me; now I was
All changed; the hidden poison, like a fire,
Had pierced the marrow of my inmost being;
I scarce could move my limbs, and longed for death.
The moment the poor lover's heart could feel
Wish to be freed from fatal cares, I rise
And bravely struggle to shake off the yoke.
Nay, but the task was hard—to drive my queen
From her ten years' abode, to face a foe
All-powerful with strength impaired; yet now
I make the attempt, and God approves my work
And grants me to unloose the ancient bonds,
And come victorious through so great a fight.
But when, distressed, she checks her fleeing slave
And oft her grief displays—when, fixed on me
She turns with lowered flame and gentle dart
Her sweetly-flashing eyes—ah! then how oft
She makes me, faltering in the path begun
Swerve from it! Oh! what course is left me now?
Can I foil her, who has worse chains in store?
I turn to flee, and roam through all the world.
First, I endured to plough the Tuscan surge
And face its storms; not fearing to commit
My liberated head to a quivering bark;
To me so punished and abhorring life
What harm could come from a precipitate death?
Westward I turned, and the Pyrenean peaks
Beheld me basking in the sunny grass;
That Ocean saw me, where the weary Sun
Bathes in the western foam his smoking steeds,
Whence he, forth-looking towards the mountain-top,
Turned into stone by hard Medusa's eye,
Casts a long shadow from its cliffs, and hides
The shuddering Moors in fast-approaching night.
Thence to the North, the land of language harsh,
I passed alone to where the British Sea
Wears with its various tides the shifting shore;
The frozen soil shuns there the ploughshare's bent;
Wheat and the vine are banished from its hills—
A land that scarce supports the wildest shrub.
What now remained, but to seek torrid climes,
To tread the realm of serpents, awesome fields,
To watch afar beneath the Equator's heat
The bare black backs of Ethiopian slaves;
Or to find Nilus' source, so long unknown,
Where Nature hides it in the inmost heart
Of Afric's dusky land? In absence now
Those waves of soul subside—grief, wrath and fear;
A kind sleep dries my tears, and a rare smile
Mounts up unwonted to my shining brow.
For now less often, less imperious, came
Before my view her image left behind.

I fear to tell the sequel, though you bid me—
Fool that I was! I thought myself secure
From Cupid's darts; repose unwonted lured me,
And the old wound but lightly cicatriced;
I struck my tent and turned—to certain death.
Scarce had I reached the city of my beloved,
When my heart felt its former load; once more
Recurred the poison of the dire disease.
What tears I shed, how oft I prayed for death
And planned to meet it, how I toiled to win
Back my lost liberty, no poet's art
Could here unfold, nor should I gain belief.
So when these chains supreme about my neck
Had fallen close, one single hope was left
Henceforth to flee; sure never rock by night
Did mariner so dread, as I that face,
Those moving tones, that graceful snowy neck,
And shoulders all with golden tresses dight—
E'en at death's door her eyes would charm me still!
Must I submit to pay once more in vain
An offering vowed for safety at the shrine
Of the angry gods, be it a broken oar
Hung on the threshold, or a torn drenched coat? [1]
Must I a waxen tablet dedicate
Fixed at their knees,[2] a stooping suppliant?
In mood contemplative, racked with such cares,
This rock, secluded isle,[3] I spied afar
And judged it safe and meet for my shipwreck.
Hither I sailed; now in these hills concealed
With tears I reckon up my life's past years;
Yet she pursues me still, and claims her rights,
Visits me waking or with threatening brow
Mocks my unrestful sleep with empty fears.
Oft—marvellous to relate—the doors thrice locked,
She bursts into my room at night, demanding
With confidence her slave; my limbs grow cold;
Forthwith the scattered river of my blood
Runs up from all the veins to guard the heart.
And if perchance a bright light were brought in,
I should be found agape, staring and pale—
All clearest tokens of a mind in dread.
I wake affrighted, 'mid a shower of tears
Rise from my couch, while from the eastern heavens
Tithon's bright spouse looks, and unveils the world,
Then leave the suspect chambers of my home.
I seek the hills and woods, peering around
And back, if haply she who broke my rest

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[1] Those saved from shipwreck used to hang their clothes in the Temple of Neptune, with a picture (*tabula votiva*) representing their danger and escape. Cf. Virg. *Æn.* XII. 768; Hor. *Od.* I. v. 13; Cic. *Nat. Deor.* III. 37.

[2] These tablets were fastened with wax to the images of the gods. Cf. "Genua incerare deorum. Juv. X. 55.

[3] P. is continuing the metaphor of the shipwreck, and so he calls Vaucluse "a rocky isle."

May follow or precede me as I go.
Scarce will my words win credit—from such plots
May I be saved !—yet in the deepest glades,
When I seem most alone, the very twigs
Assume her dreaded features, or the trunk
Of a secluded oak, or from the stream
She seems to rise, or in the clouds appears
Through air's bright void, or from the hardest rock
She bursts alive on my arrested steps.
Such snares Love weaves for me ; no hope is left
Unless the Lord Almighty rescues me
Careworn from foes devouring, or at least
His Will ordain safe refuge for me here." [1]

[1] The MS. used by D. Rossetti (*Poesie Minori del F. P.*, 3 vols., Trieste, 1829–34) begins another letter after this line (translated below, Chap. XIII.), but it is probably merely a postscript to the first.

CHAPTER X

THE PONTIFICATES OF POPES JOHN XXII. AND BENEDICT XII. (1316–1342)

WE must now retrace our steps and review the general policy towards Italy and the Empire of the two Popes at Avignon under whom Petrarch passed his youth and early manhood. It was, of course, not till after he obtained the patronage of Cardinal Colonna that he became personally involved in public affairs; but the events of his earlier years and the characters of the chief actors in them had so powerful an influence upon his political outlook that they cannot be passed over in silence.

The schism between the French and Italian cardinals resulting from the violent scenes at Carpentras (recorded in Chap. III.) continued for nearly two years. At length, by the efforts of the King of France (Louis X.) and his brother Philip, Count of Poitiers, the cardinals reassembled at Lyons. Philip, who was himself in the town, promised that they should deliberate in absolute freedom, but the death of his brother the King without heirs [1] in June, 1316, made it necessary for the Count to be in Paris; and before his departure he so far broke his promise as to leave the cardinals in the Dominican convent under a strict military guard. Six weeks passed before they came to a decision; at length, on August 7, they unanimously elected the French Cardinal of Porto, Jacques D'Euse,[2] Bishop of Avignon, who took the name of John XXII.

Rumour was afterwards busy in ascribing this surprising unanimity to a personal manœuvre of the elected candidate. Villani asserts [3] that, after inducing all the cardinals to promise

[1] He left his queen pregnant, and a son was born in November, who only lived a few days, but is reckoned as John I. of France.

[2] The name is variously spelt D'Euse, Duése or Deys, and is altered by the Italians to D'Osa or D'Ossa.

[3] Lib. IX. c. 79.

their votes to his nominee, the Bishop of Avignon, to their amazement, nominated himself. The cardinals were not likely to fall into so simple a trap as to "give a blank cheque" to one on whom they had been strongly pressed from outside to unite their suffrages. During the long interregnum King Robert of Naples had brought his powerful influence to bear on behalf of the Bishop, who was once his tutor, and by judicious flattery and presents had won over to his interests the leaders of the Italian faction. The Gascons had hoped to the last to secure a Pope from their own number; but finding this impossible, they consented to vote for one whose advanced age of seventy-two foreboded an early vacancy. It is said [1] that Napoleon Orsini, the leader of the Italians, obtained a promise from the candidate that he would not mount horse or mule until he set out for Rome. After his coronation at Lyons on September 7, he went down the Rhone by boat to Avignon and walked from the landing-place to his palace, from which he afterwards rarely emerged, and then only on foot.[2]

According to his enemies he was the son of a cobbler or—as some said—of an innkeeper at Cahors; but recent research has established that he was of respectable bourgeois extraction. Most of his life had been passed at Naples, where he had faithfully served the House of Anjou; and even after 1300, when through the influence of that House he had been appointed by Boniface to the see of Fréjus in Provence, he preferred to remain in Italy as Chancellor for Charles the Lame. Clement V. had translated him to Avignon and raised him to the purple; and his position, as Bishop of the new Papal city, combined with his proficiency in Canon Law to make him a prominent figure in the Conclave. His outward appearance was insignificant, for he was of small stature, and his features were homely to the verge of ugliness; but his health was good and his strength of will indomitable. His habits of life were sober, almost severe; his industry was extreme, and he had administrative gifts of no mean order. The long interregnum and the pillage of Clement's treasure by his relatives had produced grave confusion in the affairs of the Holy See; so John found in all directions ample scope for his talent of organization. He made arrangements for the lodgment of the cardinals

[1] Ptolemy of Lucca in Baluze, II. pp. 198, n., and 793.
[2] Mollat (*op. cit.*), p. 43, n.

among the citizens and at once began to enlarge his episcopal palace.

He was not content to act through subordinates, but gave to every matter his personal supervision. His firm measures naturally aroused opposition, and he professed to have discovered conspiracies against his life, in which even some of the cardinals were involved. The process against the bishop of his native city,[1] who is said to have poisoned his favourite nephew, and then practised magical arts against his own person, reveals in him an extent of credulity which is almost beyond belief. John has been not unfairly called "an austere, narrow-minded pedant"[2]; and his proceedings in this matter betray his deficiency in general culture. He was inexorably cruel to the chief delinquent, but had the sense to be blind to some of his abettors in high places. The Pope had learning of the legal and scholastic type; yet it did not save him from grave mistakes of policy, which were caused by his imperious and impulsive disposition. Petrarch, who must have known him in his latter years—at least at a respectful distance—speaks of him as "extremely studious, and so impetuous as to be involved in a fierce struggle with the Empire"[3]—implying perhaps that his studies unfitted him for perceiving the natural results of his own political action. He was certainly far from being the "great Pope" that he is styled by modern French historians.[4] He was tenacious in maintaining the claims recently put forth on behalf of his high office; and he was aware of the advantages attaching to his quasi-independent position at Avignon. But besides his obstinacy, he had two personal weaknesses from which only "great Popes" have been free—a nepotism almost deserving to be called shameless, and a fondness for money, which his admirers describe as a prudent husbanding of the Papal resources.[5] These failings procured him many enemies in the ranks of Churchmen—the first chiefly among the Italian cardinals, and the second in the Mendicant Orders and in all those quarters which felt the weight of his exactions. Of his first

[1] Hugues Géraud, Bishop of Cahors. The extraordinary process against him is extant. The Pope's nephew, who is said to have fallen dead at his feet, was Jacques de Via, Bishop of Avignon.

[2] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, I. p. 38.

[3] *Rer. Mem.* II. Cap. IV. (B. ed. p. 481).

[4] Christophe, II. 8; J. F. André (*Hist. de la Papauté à Avignon*), pp. 121, 172; Joudou, I. 116, 147.

[5] Mollat, p. 47.

fifteen promotions to the Cardinalate eight were from the city or diocese of Cahors and only one was an Italian. At this rate, as Milman justly remarks,[1] the College would soon have become a mere Cahorsin Conclave. Like some of his predecessors, John seems to have aspired to create an Italian principality in the hands of his own family. A great many of his relatives lived at his court, and those who were clerks were rewarded with some of the best benefices in his gift.

By the system continued, if not introduced, by this Pontiff, the number of those benefices was constantly increasing. John extended the right of "reserve"—originally applying only to those benefices whose possessor died at or near the Papal Court—to all the bishoprics of Western Christendom. This measure was alleged to be only for three years, in order to lessen the abuse of improper appointments and prevent simony; but when the three years had expired, the practice was unblushingly continued, and although the royal nominees were frequently appointed, the preferments could only be made by way of "recommendation" to the Holy See. The number of fees payable to the Chancery at Avignon was thus enormously increased; and it was from these benefices that John required the payment of the income during vacancy, and also demanded the "annates," or firstfruits, from the newly appointed incumbent. He also made a practice, when a vacancy occurred, of creating several more by translating bishops to richer sees, so that one vacancy secured several payments of annates. This wholesale invasion of the rights of lay patrons and of cathedral chapters was naturally unpopular; and where resistance might be anticipated, the Pope not seldom sent to a bishop the news of his translation and the name of his designated successor by the same messenger. Thus those who would have opposed the system were confronted by a *fait accompli.*

The fiscal reason for these encroachments was patent enough; but frequently during this reign the paramount motive was political. The state of Italy was so disturbed, while that of Germany was so openly hostile, that it was of the first importance for the Pope that prominent sees should be occupied by his own creatures. In the eyes of the mere laymen both motives were

[1] *Latin Christianity* (cr. 8vo ed.), VII. 339.

entirely worldly ; and there was a large party among the clergy which was of the same opinion. The awe and reverence which had once surrounded the Papacy was fast diminishing, in proportion as the secularity of its aims became more manifest ; but unless kings and parliaments would lead the way, resistance was no easy matter. Individual clerks were powerless ; the ubiquity of the Papal agents and their dexterous appeals for the support due to the Holy See as the champion of clerical privileges enabled the new system to prevail. The centralization of Church government, begun long before, was proceeding at a pace which should have alarmed the civil power, since it already amounted to an *imperium in imperio*. But the feeble sons of Philip the Fair were no match for Pope John, as their father had been for his predecessor. When Charles IV. protested against a tenth which the Pope wished to levy upon the French clergy, his opposition was at once silenced by the offer of another tenth, for his own use. Well might a sarcastic chronicler[1] compare the Church to a sheep which was fleeced by the one party and flayed by the other ! The success of the Pope's exactions may be measured by the enormous sums found in his treasury after his decease. According to Villani, whose brother Filippo was employed in taking the inventory, John's hoard amounted to eighteen million gold florins in specie and seven million more in plate and jewels.[2] And this was but the balance remaining after the cost of collection, and after the vast expenditure on the Italian wars,[3] on the maintenance of his interests in the peninsula and on the satisfaction of a crowd of greedy relatives and dependants.

We can hardly wonder that, during the eighteen years of such a Pontificate, there were spiritual forces within the Church which revolted at the spectacle. They saw her chief Pastor squandering vast sums wrung from her endowments on his own ambitious projects in Italy and Germany for the humiliation of the Empire, and yet retaining a balance of treasure which, even at its lowest

[1] *Grandes Chroniques*, ed. P. Paris, V. 300, quoted by Mollat, p. 380.

[2] Villani, Lib. IX. c. 20. Mollat (p. 46) maintains that the amount was only a twenty-fourth part of Villani's total—viz. 750,000 florins. I do not know on what grounds he invalidates the figures of the Italian, whose brother must have known the facts, though he may have misstated them.

[3] According to Mollat (p. 357) this amounted in ten years to nearly 2,390,000 florins.

computation,[1] was equivalent to two million sterling of our present money. The secularization of the Papacy could surely go no further. A Franciscan friar named Peter Olivi, who died in 1295, had written a commentary on the Apocalypse, in which the sharpest contrast was drawn between the rich and carnal Church of Popes and Bishops and the spiritual Church of holy poverty, represented by the extreme section of his own Order. In the approaching dispensation of the Spirit, he said, the former was to be swept away and its place taken by the purer Church. This rift in the Order had already become pronounced in the thirteenth century; and several Popes—notably Nicholas III.—had endeavoured to hold the balance between the parties by deciding that the Order must enjoy only "the use," not the ownership, of their possessions—the latter being vested in the Pope. Practically the same decision was given by Clement V. at the Council of Vienne, when the question had again become acute through the teaching of another Franciscan, Ubertino da Casale. But the spectre of discord could not be laid in this fashion. The extreme section would not submit to the control of their laxer brethren; they took the name of "Observants," or "Spirituals," to distinguish themselves from the "Conventuals," who accepted the Papal decision. The former were especially numerous in Sicily, Naples and Provence; and during the interregnum in the Papacy (1314–1316) they committed serious disorders in the South of France—arising, it seems, from resistance to persecution. Pope John made rigorous use of the Inquisition to repress their excesses, and issued Bull after Bull in which their tenets were condemned. His first measures were taken in concert with Michael of Cesena, the General of the Order, whose authority had been openly spurned. But in 1321 a new and more serious division arose in their ranks. This was on the question whether Christ and His Apostles professed the rule of absolute poverty. A Chapter of the Order at Perugia in 1322, under the presidency of the General, formally accepted this doctrine of "evangelical poverty"; and it seemed to follow that not the Order alone, but the whole governing body of the Church, which claimed to stand in the place of Christ and His Apostles, were bound by this rule.

[1] That is, taking the reduced figure of Mollat in note 3, p. 373, and reckoning the gold florin at the value of £2½ to £3 of our present money. T. Okey (*op. cit.* pp. 77, 78), following E. Müntz, reckons it at £4, which would make Villani's estimate amount to £100,000,000 sterling!

The Pope, as might have been expected, regarded this tenet as an audacious challenge of his own position. He pronounced the Franciscans guilty of heresy, and he was supported by the rival Order of St. Dominic and by the University of Paris, then under their influence. He bitterly taunted the Franciscans with their vast possessions, and he withdrew from them the privilege of holding and administering goods in the name of the Roman See. The consequence was that even the " use " enjoyed by the Order could now be revoked, and that the property would have to revert to the original owners. The Pope was content with no half-measures. He formally annulled the Bull of Nicholas III., and declared that even the " use " of things necessary implied possession, which the rules of the Order forbade. The extreme Franciscans retorted by accusing the Pope of heresy, and openly joined the ranks of his political adversaries. The main body of the Order were induced by threats to return to their obedience and to elect a new General. But its most zealous members, even if they did not actually rebel, held the Pope in abhorrence. Our English William of Ockham, the " Invincible Doctor," employed all his dialectical skill in defence of the " Spirituals." We may think that the Pope's logic was sound on the main points in dispute, and yet that it was impolitic to drive to extremities a party which wielded a vast influence in Italy. Even John's Guelf ally, King Robert, had been educated by friars of the party now proscribed, and protected them in Naples to the utmost of his power. But in reality the condemned doctrine " laid the axe to the root " of the Pope's temporal power. If neither Christ nor His Apostles had had aught to do with the things of this world, it was hard to see on what grounds Christ's Vicar based his vast claims for the Apostolic See.

The controversy had arisen at the very time when those claims reached their highest point. At the moment of John's election the Empire was in dispute between Louis of Bavaria and Frederick of Austria, the nominees of rival factions among the Electors. John took care to recognize neither of them ; and since he upheld the pretension of his recent predecessors to rule the Empire during a vacancy, the contest afforded a useful opportunity to enforce that pretension. He was accused [1] of having said that

[1] In the appeal of Louis against the Pope (*v. infra*, p. 380), Baluze, t. II. p. 478.

the quarrels of kings and princes meant a powerful Pope; and whether he made the assertion or not, he acted entirely on that principle. His chief supporter, Robert of Naples, had shortly before submitted a memorial to the Holy See, praying the Pope, if already elected,[1] either to refuse recognition to the Emperor or to exclude any candidate whom he might prefer from all participation in the affairs of Italy. The Pope was reminded that the mediæval Empire rested upon violence and oppression, and therefore was bound to perish by the same means. The Germans, it was declared, were the natural enemies of the French and the Italians, and only passed the Alps in order to stir up discord among the latter people. This manifesto, saturated with Guelf ideas, was a veiled attempt to promote the King's plan of uniting the whole peninsula under his own sway. The Pope's sympathies were entirely Guelf; but he did not desire to make the sovereign of Avignon too powerful in Italy. The Ghibellines, though depressed for the moment by the death of Henry VII., had recovered some of their prestige by their victory at Montecatini in 1315; the Pope therefore had to walk warily and aim at an equilibrium of forces, with the balance inclining towards his Guelf allies. Acting on his declared decision that the Empire was still vacant and that therefore its power lay in his own hands, he appointed Robert Imperial vicar in Italy (July 16, 1317); he also sent strict orders to those Ghibelline leaders in Lombardy, who had received commissions from Henry—especially to Matteo Visconti at Milan and Can Grande della Scala at Verona—to resign their powers into Robert's hands. Matteo complied so far as to renounce his Imperial commission; but he took no notice of the further order to desist from his attack on Genoa, where he was attempting to restore the exiled Ghibellines. His disobedience was punished by excommunication and interdict, which were scarcely able to ruffle his composure. The frequent use of this spiritual weapon for party ends had blunted its effect upon the Italians, who could generally find ecclesiastics courageous enough to disregard it. In 1319 Robert came to the succour of Genoa, and eventually succeeded in raising the siege; and the next year he proceeded to his Provençal capital to consult the Pope about the affairs of Italy. The result was the proclamation

[1] See Baddeley's *Robert the Wise and his Heirs*, pp. 130–133. The memorial seems to have been drawn up during the interregnum.

of a crusade against Visconti and the dispatch of the Pope's nephew,[1] Bertrand du Pouget, as Cardinal-Legate for restoring peace to Italy—or, in other words, for the extermination of the Pope's enemies there.

The real object of the last measure, which the Pope probably did not reveal to Robert, was to secure by conquest a principality in the North of Italy, which should be vested in his own family and devoted to the Holy See. The Cardinal, however, had but a small force at his command ; and the Pope tried to strengthen his position by successively procuring the aid of Philip of Valois, heir to the French throne (1321), and of Henry, brother of the Austrian pretender to the Empire (1322), against the powerful Ghibelline leaders. Both princes proved more than lukewarm in his service, and were content to be bought off by the money and gifts of the Visconti. But Papal emissaries managed to undermine the loyalty of the Milanese to Matteo ; and in 1322 he resigned the lordship of the city to his son Galeazzo, and died soon after (June 27). His five sons, however, were able generals and skilful diplomatists. They succeeded in recalling to their standards the lords of Verona and Mantua, who had been tempted by the offers of the Legate. But the Visconti were hard pressed ; for the Guelf forces under the Legate and the Catalan general Cardona were far superior and had assembled in Lombardy for the prosecution of the crusade. In March, 1323, this powerful army laid siege to the suburbs of Milan, and Galeazzo was forced to implore help from Louis of Bavaria, who had now vanquished and imprisoned his rival Frederick. This success he had achieved six months before at the battle of Mühldorf (September 28, 1322) ; and the Pope, though still refusing to acknowledge his election, wrote to him in friendly terms, and was merely manœuvring to secure his complete submission. But Louis now realized that his interests in Italy were imperilled by the crusade against Milan ; and he sent a force of three hundred cavalry to the succour of Galeazzo, investing their leader with a commission as his vicar. They forced their way into Milan and so reanimated the defence that on July 25 the army of the Legate, wasted by defeats and

[1] In Italy he was commonly reported to be John's son ; and P., writing many years later (*S. T.* 17, of 1357, B. ed. 804), notices the report. In French writers he is usually called " du Poiet," but I follow the spelling of Mollat, which is nearer the Italian " Poggetto." He was no relative of the Orsini, as Mr. Hollway-Calthrop states (p. 61).

by malarial fever, was compelled to raise the siege and retreat in haste; while the Visconti and other Ghibelline leaders were also granted Imperial commissions. The Pope was in a transport of fury at the failure of his schemes; and his choler was turned almost to despair when, on the following Shrove Tuesday (February 28, 1324), the Legate suffered a disastrous defeat at Vaprio. Numbers of his soldiers were drowned in attempting to cross the Adda; several of the Guelf leaders were slain, and Cardona the general was taken prisoner.

The grand plan of the Pope, to which he had bent all his energies, had come to nought—chiefly through the intervention of an upstart German prince, whom he had previously despised as of no account. His measures of vengeance became more severe with each successive blow of fortune. On October 8, 1323, he summoned Louis to appear at Avignon within three months and answer for his contumacy; and in this summons Louis was bidden to desist from the exercise of his pretended sovereign functions. In January, 1324, he sent envoys to plead for a further delay of two months; but on March 23 the Pope published a Bull, solemnly excommunicating Louis and all who should support him and declaring him for ever incapable of succeeding to the Empire. The Pope's ally and prompter, King Robert, who had spent nearly four years in Provence, sailed back in the following month (April, 1324) to his Italian dominions.

The anger of John was increased by the intelligence that the "Spiritual" Franciscans throughout Italy were making common cause with Louis. This was the very year when Marsilio of Padua, in collaboration with John of Jaudun, wrote his famous treatise, *Defensor Pacis*, which boldly challenges the right of the Church, or any priest speaking on her behalf, to interfere with the exercise of the civil power. The book was far in advance of its age, for its arguments undermine the very foundations of the Papal theocracy. Fortunately for the Pope, Louis of Bavaria was no genius, nor even a sovereign of marked ability. He did not possess the gift of getting full profit out of his opponents' mistakes. The Pope had committed two colossal blunders. By his selfish Italian schemes he had provoked Louis, who at first had no quarrel with the Papacy, to interfere in the affairs of Italy—the very thing which his policy had been designed to prevent; and further, by his own unjustified interference with the Germans'

free choice of their sovereigns, he had aroused the same national spirit among them which had inspired the French against Boniface. The Empire, as an extra-German power, had lost all but the shadow of its former greatness; and the Imperial rights in Italy, though in theory extensive, would soon have sunk into desuetude, if he had not revived them by his opposition. Thus the Pope and his patron seemed to Italians not to be striving for peace, but rather for their own selfish ends, to be deliberately fanning the flame of war.

Petrarch has left us an anecdote [1] which, whether authentic or not—and he evidently accepted it as true—illustrates both his own attitude, as a patriotic Italian, to the Pope's proceedings and also the feelings of hatred towards Italy which were believed to animate the French Popes and their creatures. The incident occurred at the time when the Pontifical troops had sustained a series of defeats in their attack upon Milan—that is, in June and July, 1323—and when John was beginning to realize the imminent failure of his enterprise against the Visconti. Petrarch says that he, the Father of Christians, was endeavouring to reduce Italy to subjection, and was treating a Christian country and city as if they were Egypt or Damascus—a mere nest of Saracens. He had sent his Legate, not on a peaceful apostolic errand, but like a brigand—a modern Hannibal—equipped with all the pomp and fury of war. The Pope, having found that his blow had miscarried, was one day sitting in his cabinet, a prey to bitter melancholy, when one of the cardinals,[2] who was his special favourite, was announced. Petrarch says that, though then but a youth,[3] he knew this man by sight and held him in the utmost detestation, doubtless for his bias against Italy. The Cardinal, presuming upon his relationship to the Pope, told him that since he desired to humiliate Italy, he might deal his enemies one fatal stroke which would annihilate all their plans. He needed but to speak the word, and he could transfer the seat of the Papacy to his native city of Cahors and the Empire to Gascony; he would thus

[1] In *S. T.* 17 (B. ed. pp. 804, 805). If the date of 1357 suggested for this letter be correct, P. wrote it at Milan.

[2] P. does not name the cardinal, but there can be little doubt that it was the Pope's nephew, Arnaud de Via, who had succeeded his brother as Bishop of Avignon.

[3] He calls himself "puer." He was nineteen when the incident occurred, but had perhaps learnt to "detest" the Bishop in his earlier years.

deprive the race which they both hated of a double source of prestige. The Pope received the suggestion with a sardonic smile of contempt, and asked if he was fool enough not to see that in such a case the Pope would sink to be Bishop of Cahors, and the Emperor to be merely prefect of Gascony, while the ruler of Rome, in spiritual things as in temporal, would be master of the world. That way lay not the ruin of Italy, but the restoration of her ancient glory. Their policy must be to bide their time, and at all costs to prevent an Italian from ascending the throne of St. Peter. "Whether we will or no," concluded the Pope, "Rome will be capital of the world." While condemning John's animus against Italy, Petrarch naturally applauds his sagacity in recognizing the real foundations of his power. The strangest part of the story is that the Pope should have supposed he could transfer the Empire at his pleasure from Germany to some other place of his own choosing.

And yet at this very time John was straining every nerve to secure what his predecessor had been so anxious to avert—the union of the Empire to France by the election to the former of King Charles the Fair. There may have been some secret compact by which Charles was to resign his rights in Italy in favour of the King of Naples. The two sovereigns conferred with the Pope at Avignon in July, 1323; the Luxemburg interest had already been adroitly detached from Louis by the marriage of Maria, sister of John of Bohemia, to the French king. But the new queen died in childbirth early in the next year; and the Bohemian sovereign on his return to Germany repented of his defection from Louis. The national feeling of Germany had been aroused by the conduct of the Pope towards the latter; the publication of the Papal Bull was forbidden and the Dominicans, who supported it, found their schools and churches deserted. At the Diet of Frankfort (January and May, 1324) Louis published a solemn protest against the Papal sentence, in which he accused John of heresy and appealed to a General Council. The language of this manifesto reveals its authors to have been the leaders of the "Spiritual" Franciscans, who had openly espoused the Emperor's cause. But Louis was still harassed by the opposition of Leopold of Austria, brother of his German rival; and at a meeting of the Electors with Papal and French envoys at Rense, near Coblenz (January, 1325), the King of France was proposed,

and his election almost carried. In the following March Louis released his Hapsburg prisoner and arranged with him an amicable treaty, by which they were to share the Empire between them ; and when the Electors objected, it was proposed that Frederick should reign in Germany and Louis in Italy. The Pope declared the treaty null and void, but failed to shake the loyalty of Frederick to his new friend. However, on the death of his brother Leopold (February, 1326), Frederick withdrew his claims ; and in March, at the Diet of Spires, Louis, as undisputed Emperor, announced his intention of proceeding to Italy for his coronation. The ecclesiastical Electors objected that he was under the Pope's ban ; and he replied that they had taught him to despise these spiritual censures as much as the Italians did. The victories of the Ghibellines in the previous autumn [1] probably contributed to this resolution ; but it was not carried out till the following February (1327), when the successes of the Legate in taking Modena and Bologna impelled the Ghibellines to press for German aid.

In February, 1327, the Ghibelline chieftains of Lombardy assembled round Louis at Trent. Primarily, no doubt, it was a council of war ; but the presence of many renegade bishops and friars gave it almost the character of a council of Churchmen, and a formal process was instituted against Pope John, who was declared a heretic. This measure was designed merely to clear the air and prejudice public opinion ; but it was also a sign that the ecclesiastical allies of Louis intended to burn their boats, and since they could not convoke the General Council to which they appealed, had determined to act without it. The Ghibellines offered a subsidy of 150,000 florins to Louis when he should have entered Milan ; and he received the Iron Crown in that city from the excommunicate Bishop of Arezzo on Whitsunday (May 31). Avoiding the mistake of Henry VII. in letting himself be delayed by Lombard resistance, Louis passed the Apennines, and when joined by the seasoned troops of Castruccio the Ghibelline lord of Lucca, besieged and took Pisa (October 8). The citizens of Rome had sent warning to the Pope that if he did not return and defend their city, they should side with his opponent. Already in April they had expelled the officers of the King of Naples ; and although beaten by his troops at Ostia in August, their

[1] Mentioned in Chap. IV. pp. 132, 133.

militia foiled two separate attacks on the city at the end of September.

Louis entered Rome on January 7; and on the 11th he convened a parliament on the Capitol, in which by the mouth of a bishop he requested to be honoured by the people with the Imperial crown. On the following Sunday (17th) the ceremony was performed by two bishops; but the crown was placed upon the Emperor's head by Sciarra Colonna—the enemy of Pope Boniface—as representative of the Roman People. The democratic character of the election and coronation of Louis is of the utmost importance, though overlooked by many historians of the period. It was not resorted to merely because he was acting in defiance of the Pope; it was a deliberate innovation—as a consequence of the theory of Marsilio of Padua that the source of the civil, and even of the Imperial, power lay in the people. Marsilio was now in attendance upon Louis, who appointed him his spiritual vicar in Rome, and in listening to his advice, was no doubt well aware of the principle which it involved. That advice would be that as he came without the Pope's blessing, he must either assume the Imperial dignity with the assent of the people or against their will; it was far better to take it at their invitation than to ignore or overawe them. This position harmonized with the spirit of revolt which was abroad; but if the innovators had the best of the historical argument, their conservative opponents could rely on hard existing facts. It was well enough to say that the ancient Romans had first given the "imperium" and that their successors had transferred it to Charlemagne of their own free will—without any "translation" at the Pope's bidding. But who were the Romans of the fourteenth century? A mere motley rabble, the sport for centuries of petty barons of the Campagna, and now for many years the temporal subjects of the Pope. This "hard fact" was the weakness of Dante's theoretic treatise, *De Monarchiâ*, which treated the Romans of his own day as if they were the legitimate heirs of the "Populus Romanus" of old. Yet that treatise, with those of Marsilio and Ockham, was stirring the minds of educated men, and the Church could not leave them unnoticed. The *Defensor Pacis* had been solemnly censured in a Papal Bull of the previous year (October 23, 1327), and in the following (1329) the *De Monarchiâ* was publicly burned by

Cardinal du Pouget at Bologna. These treatises were condemned for traversing the claims asserted by the Papacy; yet the arguments of the former, that the necessity of the Emperor's "confirmation" by the Pope was a fiction and that the coronation conveyed no more than a religious blessing (like the crowning of the French kings), were historically unassailable. But it is the strength of usurpations that when their accomplished facts come into conflict with history or theory, it is the latter which has to give way in the end. The coronation of an Emperor without the Pope's authority was without precedent, and gave a shock to the minds of men.

The only way in which the act could be publicly defended was to depose the Pope for his alleged heresy. Yet it was three months before this inevitable measure was taken; and during those months Louis was fast losing ground with the fickle people of Rome. Complaints arose of the licence of his soldiery, of the scarcity of food, and of the exacting tribute which he was compelled to levy. The greater number of the Roman clergy had left the city; and threats, and even torture, were employed to compel those who remained to say Mass. These were the acts of Marsilio himself, the apostle of liberty; but he soon saw that if the Pope were deposed, the Church could not be left without a Visible Head. Accordingly on April 18 a parliament was held on the Capitol, in which the Emperor pronounced "Jacques of Cahors" a heretic and Antichrist, and deprived him of all spiritual power. Proceedings for filling his place were deferred to an early day; and the appeal for some one to rise in defence of the Pope was naturally received with silence in that partisan assembly.

But before anything further could be done, a youthful champion unexpectedly came forward. On April 22 Giacomo Colonna, already the Pope's chaplain, appeared before the doors of San Marcello with four masked attendants and addressed a crowd of more than a thousand people. He read at length the Pope's Bull [1] excommunicating and deposing Louis, which no one had yet ventured to publish in Rome. At its close he said

[1] It is doubtful to which of the many Bulls of excommunication this refers. Probably it was that of March 3, in which Louis was placed under anathema and his coronation pronounced null. The process of March 31 against the Roman People could hardly have reached Rome in three weeks.

that the rumour of Louis' acceptance as Emperor by the Roman clergy was false. The leading clergy had all left the city in order to avoid contact with excommunicate persons. He was himself prepared to maintain in any neutral place, whether by argument or by arms, that John was a true Catholic and the only legitimate Pope. With these words he affixed the Bull to the doors of the church and rode away unmolested to Palestrina with his attendants, of whom one is said to have been Lælius, Petrarch's friend in after years. Stefano Colonna, the father of Giacomo, had retired to his fortress of Palestrina at the coming of "the Bavarian" and given no countenance to the Imperial cause, though his brother Sciarra was one of its leaders. The young noble's act was one of extraordinary daring, and within a month—as soon as the news could have reached Avignon—it was rewarded, as we have seen, with a bishopric. The absence of opposition in the Roman crowd showed plainly the undecided temper of the people.

On receiving the news at the Vatican, Louis was furious, and at once sent horsemen to intercept the fugitive, but without success. On the following day he assembled the popular leaders, and promulgated a law that no Pope might be absent from the city without permission of the people and then not more than two days' journey, or longer than three months in the summer; if he failed to return after being thrice summoned he was to forfeit his office. It has been truly said [1] that this was to degrade the Pope to be a mere podestà; but it was meant as a concession to the Roman indignation at the continued absence of the Papal Court. Among the alleged causes of John's deposition five days earlier, the residence at Avignon had been specially mentioned; and the law seemed an *ex post facto* justification of so inconclusive a reason. It implied also that a new Pope was to be appointed; and, within a few days, an assembly of priests and laymen selected a Franciscan, Pietro di Corbara. On May 12 the "new Pope" appeared under a baldachin in front of St. Peter's; and the Bishop of Venice appealed for the popular assent, which was given. Louis then invested "Nicholas V." (as he was styled) with the Fisherman's Ring; and forthwith in the cathedral the antipope was consecrated by the Bishop and crowned by the Emperor himself. It was

[1] Gregorovius, Vol. VI. Pt. I. (*ed. cit.*), p. 157.

intended to be a restoration of the right of election by the people, which had been taken away from them by the cardinals two hundred and sixty years before; and the ratification and coronation by the Emperor was meant to be a "turning of the tables" upon the Avignon Papacy.

It was a bold scheme; but unfortunately for its success it ignored the patent fact that in the eyes of the majority of Christians the previous deposition of John was irregular—a mere "hole and corner" affair—and that therefore the Papacy was not vacant. The more moderate men, who may have thought that Louis had been hardly treated by the Pope, were not prepared to follow him into schism. It was one of those numerous cases in which doctrinaires fail to see that, by pushing their theories to an extreme, they do more harm than good to their own cause. Whatever may be said of his literary advisers, Louis himself was no idealist, but a man of weak character and small intellect, who allowed his necessities to be turned by religious fanatics to their own profit. In modern times we can feel no sympathy with either party; but we can see that if Louis went too far, the Pope injured his own cause still more by his lack of moderation.

During the remaining eighteen months of the Emperor's stay in Italy (June, 1328, to December, 1329), the stars in their courses seemed to fight against him. Yet the Pope had no large views for the pacification of Italy; he never dreamed of compromise and only desired the complete subjugation of his foes. In the summer of 1328 Louis attempted to advance against Naples; but his rear was threatened by the Roman nobles of the opposite party and by Robert's son, the Duke of Calabria, at Florence. They blocked his communications and produced a dire scarcity in Rome, which turned the citizens against Louis. He was forced to evacuate the city in August, and the following night his enemies gained possession of it and restored the authority of Robert, with an Orsini and Stefano Colonno as prosenators. Louis and the antipope retired to Viterbo, and thence on September 21 to Pisa, where his ablest general, Castruccio, had a few days before been removed by death. The Emperor was now to find that the Ghibelline leaders, whose cause he had ruined by his extreme measures, were inclined to turn against him. They had throughout been fighting for their

own hand rather than for their suzerain ; but he had often failed to keep faith with them and to consult their legitimate interests. During the next twelve months many of them died—as Galeazzo Visconti, Sciarra Colonna, Passerino at Mantua and Can Grande at Verona ; the very foundations of the Ghibelline League seemed crumbling away. At Pisa Louis remained seven months, during which eight hundred of his German cavalry revolted at not receiving their pay, and marched away to offer their services to the highest bidder. This mutiny marked the beginning of the disastrous employment of " Condottieri," which was the curse of Italy for a century and was often lamented by Petrarch. By the autumn of 1329 Louis was reduced to wandering along the course of the Po with shrunken forces and with scarcely a friend left among the Italians. In December he retired to Trent, and soon after withdrew across the Alps to Germany, where his enemies had again become active. It had been an inglorious expedition, which destroyed almost the last shred of respect for the Empire in Italy. The dream of Dante had been proved baseless within ten years of his death. What hope now remained for the unhappy peninsula, distracted by the feuds of its petty potentates and by the selfish policy of foreign Popes, who obstinately remained outside its borders, yet refused to leave it to work out its own salvation? But the enterprise left its mark for many years after its failure, and it has been necessary to record it in order to understand the political events of the next forty years, with which our poet was to be so closely connected.

Among the many mistakes committed by Louis perhaps the chief was his attempt to make use of a religious dispute within the Church for the furtherance of his own political ends. The recalcitrant Franciscans were no doubt a great spiritual power through their protest against evils which all could see ; but the whole Order was unpopular with the secular clergy, and their intrusion into the political sphere tended to weaken such influence as they had gained. The worst error of all was the creation of an antipope. The unfortunate Peter of Corbara remained in hiding near Pisa for several months after his desertion by his Imperial abettors, and was at length delivered up to the agents of Pope John in July, 1330, with the stipulation that his life should be spared. The following month he renounced his perilous dignity with becoming contrition in the cathedral

of Pisa, and was then taken off by sea to Avignon, where he appeared before Pope and cardinals with a halter round his neck. His abject petition for mercy and absolution was granted; but he was kept in a sort of "honourable confinement" till his death four years later. Petrarch was at Lombez, and therefore did not witness the humiliating entry of the Pope's captive.

The triumph of the Pope seemed, indeed, almost complete. In February of the same year he had received a deputation of three priests from the citizens of Rome, imploring pardon for their revolt from his authority, confessing that they had been misled as to the extent of their power and offering him the full lordship of the city for his life. John loftily gave them absolution on condition that they publicly renounced their supposed rights in all the states of Christendom. Throughout the year 1330 he was constantly receiving envoys from Italian princes and cities, who desired to make their submission. Even the presumptuous "Bavarian" promised to make a public recantation of his errors, if the Pope would absolve him and acknowledge his title. But John was bent on forcing a new election to the Empire—in which he utterly failed—and he was aware that the "crowned culprit" was still sheltering the rebellious Franciscans at his court. The interests of the Kings of France and Naples combined with his own vindictive temper to prevent any accommodation.

But there was a lesser potentate, regarded in his day as "the pink of chivalry," who, being equally connected both with the French and German courts, was well fitted to promote an understanding between them. This was John, the son of Henry VII., who had obtained the kingdom of Bohemia by marriage, but preferred to reside in his hereditary fief of Luxemburg, whence he frequently journeyed to the French capital for tournaments and other knightly displays, as congenial to the new king Philip as to himself. He was a restless and ambitious man in the prime of life—entirely illiterate, but with frank and engaging manners and a considerable gift of eloquence. He was empowered by Louis to effect his reconciliation with the Pope, and in 1330 was offered, but does not appear to have accepted, the thankless post of his vicar in Italy. In December this king happened to be at Trent making arrangements for the marriage of his son, when a message reached him from the city of Brescia,

offering him the lordship of the town, if he would deliver it from the threatened attack of Mastino della Scala, nephew and successor of Can Grande at Verona. He complied, and by his address induced the invader to retire, with the immediate result that the important towns of Bergamo, Crema, Cremona, Vercelli, Novara, Pavia, Parma, Reggio and Modena placed themselves in quick succession under his protection. Even Milan caught the infection ; and Azzo Visconti was induced to do him homage and consent to act as his vicar. These communes were so weary of the strife of parties and the rivalry of tyrants that they eagerly invited a complete stranger, with Imperial connexions but of great personal charm, to take charge of their liberties. The dominant party usually tried to stipulate that their exiled opponents should not be restored ; but the new lord, in the mediating spirit of his father, soon persuaded them not to insist on this condition. In February, 1331, a Florentine army was besieging Lucca and on the point of reducing it, when a message arrived from the King demanding their retirement, as he had bought the lordship from its tyrant Spinola. The Florentines were highly incensed at the interference, but they were soon compelled to raise the siege.

Both the Italian parties looked askance at the mysterious enterprise of this German knight-errant. Florence and the King of Naples suspected that he was an emissary of Louis ; but the latter denied all knowledge of his proceedings, and, on demanding the reason of his descent into Italy, received the reply that he came to visit the graves of his parents.[1] The Pope, too, was at first inclined to be suspicious and protested by letter to the Florentine Signory that the Church had given no assent to King John's expedition. But as soon as he was satisfied that the hated " Bavarian " was not behind the project, he began to consider whether he might not turn it to his own advantage. If he could persuade the King to aim at an Italian principality under the suzerainty of the Holy See, he might erect a solid barrier against Imperial influence in Italy. His nephew and legate, Cardinal du Pouget, had a private interview with the King at Castel Franco on April 16, 1331 ; and though the issue

[1] P. must have heard this story, for in the poem quoted below he expressly says (ll. 127, 128) that John cared nothing for the tomb of his parents.

did not at once transpire, both parties separated on the best of terms, and the understanding between them created universal alarm throughout Italy. The double game concerted between the two Johns imposed upon no one, since the Guelfs had to be assured that the Pope would protect the liberties of the communes, and the Ghibellines that Imperial rights would not be forgotten. To Florence the outlook was especially ominous, for she had suffered positive damage by the loss of Lucca, and profoundly distrusted the son of her ancient enemy.

The patriotic soul of Petrarch in the Colonna Palace was as much bewildered as the rest of the world. It was probably at this juncture [1] that he expressed his puzzled consternation in a long letter [2] of 175 Latin hexameters to an Italian friend, Enea Tolomei of Siena. His correspondent was a Dominican friar of a noble Guelf family, who was a professor of theology in the convents of his order, principally at Sta. Maria Novella in Florence. We know nothing of the previous relations between them; but they must have been afterwards on intimate terms, though no other letter is extant; for Enea was one of the very few who was allowed to read at least part of Petrarch's jealously guarded poem, the *Africa*.[3] The friar became Inquisitor-General of Tuscany in 1345 and died, perhaps of the plague, in 1348. From this letter we may assume that he was a poet, and some of his manuscript Latin poems are said still to exist in Roman libraries. He also wrote a prose treatise, *De paupertate Christi*,[4] on which question, apart from his political leanings, he would, as a Dominican, take the Papal side. It is significant that our poet makes not the faintest allusion to the Pope's attitude towards King John, which we know he would regard with no favourable eye. At the same time his choice of a correspondent in his own ancestral city, to which he had no cause to be grateful, indicates the general alarm felt by Italian patriots at the new turn of affairs.

[1] De Sade (I. 196), who is followed by Rossetti (II. 34), would date the letter a year and a half later, at the beginning of 1333. I agree with Diana Magrini (pp. 71, 72) that its contents, especially the allusion to the recent occupation of Lucca (ll. 134, 135), point rather to the summer of 1331. John's intimate relations with Paris would from the first create the suspicion that he had France behind him.

[2] *Ep. Metr.* I. iii.

[3] *Ibid.* II. xi. (to Zoilus), l. 33.

[4] Now in Florence at the Laurentian library.

The poem is not one of his best; its rhetoric lacks spontaneity, and in speaking of the enemy of Italy the writer seems to be intentionally obscure. But it is the first of his political writings; and there burns within it the same ardent love of his native land, which a few years later was to produce the noble Canzone, "Italia mia." Indeed, as regards the details of treatment—the recollection of past glories, the blame of internal discord and the hope of a better future—the later poem is but an echo of the earlier. But in dealing with a theme that stirred him deeply, Petrarch is always more felicitous in Italian than in Latin. In this letter he wishes that all his limbs had a voice to express his horror of the servitude impending over her, who had once been mistress of the world. Her former slaves, the barbarians, are threatening to avenge the yoke which she formerly placed upon their necks. Perhaps Italy has been too fortunate and has excited envy; but her enemies are now taking advantage of her fratricidal strife. She is like a bark adrift upon the rocks, with her crew all wanting to steer different ways; but meanwhile the water stealthily makes way in the hold, and adverse winds strike upon her doomed sides. One foe in particular [1] looks down from the Alps and covets her splendid cities and teeming wealth. Under cover of specious promises he steals upon his prey like a wolf, and will not be content with his recent seizure of deserted Lucca. There is but one road to salvation—to arouse the half-extinct valour of the race and arm it for defence. The foe must be warned, as Cineas warned Pyrrhus, to retire and chase stags in his native forests and not to meddle with sleeping lions.[2] He may yet see the day when the Romans will again pass the Rhine in triumph and march along the banks of the Seine and the Garonne. Fear and affection nerve the poet, though an exile on the Rhone, to stretch a hand from the shore and save his drowning mother. He entreats his friend to relieve his grave forbodings by a word of comfort and encouragement.

Here, as throughout his life, Petrarch sees in the Italy of his day the rightful heir to all the glories of ancient Rome.

[1] John of Bohemia is evidently meant here—not, as some have thought, the French nation or its king—as the line about Lucca proves. Yet it is strange that the son of an Emperor, who had once been the hope of P.'s father, should be dubbed a barbarian.

[2] I cannot trace this reference.

The thousand years that have intervened since the empire of Constantine have taught him no lessons. For him the history of those years, of which he had far less knowledge than of the previous five hundred, is all centred in Rome. He might have admitted her "Decline" but would never have acknowledged her "Fall." It is precisely the same poetic delusion which vitiates the argument of Dante's *De Monarchiâ*. The northern peoples are all classed together as barbarians—even the German prince who grasped in his trembling hand the Imperial sceptre. But in spite of the nationality of John of Bohemia, the poet seems to hint at the close that France is "the enemy"; and the history of the next two centuries was to prove the correctness of his presage. This hint does not necessarily mean that Philip of Valois had already shown his hand, for by education and residence King John was more French than German, and France was from the first suspected of having inspired his undertaking.

That suspicion, fostered by his secret dealings with the Legate and by Italian distrust of the Pope, led the tyrants and republics from Tuscany to the Alps for once to close their ranks. The Ghibelline leaders of Lombardy and the Romagna formed a league against King John in August, 1331; and the Emperor himself, in concert with the Kings of Hungary and Poland and the Duke of Austria, fomented disturbances in Bohemia and Moravia. The adventurous John was thus constrained to return to Germany, leaving his son Charles, then but sixteen years of age (of whom we shall hear more in the sequel), in nominal command of his forces at Parma. He somehow regained the confidence of Louis in 1332, and proceeded to Paris for military aid, which was promised him for the ensuing year. In the autumn he betook himself to King Robert's city of Avignon, to the latter's great discontent, for a conference with the Pope. It is said that the Pontiff showed him coolness in public, but treated him cordially in private audience, finally dismissing him to fetch his French succours at the end of the year. The support which the Pope was evidently according to the Bohemian had already cost him his Guelf friends in Italy. In September, 1332, King Robert and Florence formally joined the Ghibelline League, and a compact was made to divide John's cities among the Leaguers. This extraordinary concord between inveterate foes, which must have delighted Petrarch, was partly caused by distrust of the Pope's

nephew and legate, who was plainly bent upon dividing Lombardy and the Romagna between himself and King John. He laid Florence under an interdict for combining with the enemies of the Church, and did the same with Ferrara, against which he was concentrating all his forces. Already master of Bologna, he was constructing a strong citadel there, which he said was to be the residence of the Pope, though it looked far more like a fortress for the purpose of overawing the citizens. In the previous February, John XXII. had sent a message to the Bolognese, announcing his intention to reside in their city; he also sent nuncios to Rome, of whom one, Cardinal Giovanni Orsini, had legatine powers, to spread the notion that he was returning to Rome and to prepare the Vatican and its gardens for his reception. It is impossible to suppose that at his advanced age he had any serious intention of removing to Italy. It was merely a political move to smooth the way for his nephew's advancement, and it was not generally believed, though Bologna feigned unbounded joy at the prospect.

Meanwhile King John, with eight hundred French cavalry under the Comte d'Armagnac, descended into Italy, and in February, 1333, joined forces with the Legate for the reduction of Ferrara. Before the town was surrounded, the League managed to throw into it a contingent for its defence; and these troops, making a sally on April 14, engaged the besiegers in battle beneath the walls. Victory at length declared for the League, which took a number of prisoners, among them the Comte d'Armagnac. A second but less serious defeat at Argenta in June convinced the King that he must abandon his fantastic enterprise. The enthusiasm of his welcome had entirely evaporated, and he proceeded to dispose of his conquests, and the liberties that he had promised to protect, for hard cash. He sold Parma and Lucca to the Rossi family, who were citizens of the former, and other cities to other petty tyrants. In October he sent back his German troops to Bohemia and proceeded with his French allies to Paris for a series of tournaments and fêtes. His retreat left his ally the Legate in a critical position. On March 17, 1334, when the forces of the League were approaching the city, Bologna rose against him; and he owed his life and liberty to Florence, which sent a small force for his protection. He was escorted, much crestfallen, to the sea-board, whence he sailed to Avignon: and

the Pope's projects in Romagna, maintained for fourteen years, came to a sudden and inglorious close.

During these years the condition of Rome was profoundly disturbed; and the illusive promises of the Pope's arrival, held out by his two nuncios, remained unfulfilled. His custom of ruling the city through the King of Naples as his deputy was an utter failure. The King, though only in middle life, had lost much of his vigour. He cared little for Rome, so long as it was safe from German domination; and the Pope had estranged him by secretly supporting John of Bohemia. The vicars whom he usually appointed to discharge his office of Senator had no military force at their back, and could not cope with the eternal animosities of the barons. In 1333 the precarious truce between the Orsini and the Colonna was suddenly broken; and it is difficult to decide which party was the aggressor. A battle took place on May 22 at Zagarolo, near St. Cesario, between the Colonna under Stefano the younger [1] and the Orsini under Bertoldo and his cousin Francesco, one of the Guelf Counts of Anguillara, in which the two latter were slain. Villani, a Guelf, represents that the Orsini fell into an ambush; Petrarch, who of course gives the Colonna version, asserts the direct contrary. The subsequent course of events seems to prove that Villani was misinformed. The Colonna were outnumbered, and even after their victory were obliged to act on the defensive. The Pope's Orsini legate flew to the succour of his kinsmen with the vassals of the Church, destroyed the Colonna fortress of Giove and attacked old Stefano in his Roman quarters. When the Pope heard, as no doubt he did at once by courier, of this conduct of his legate, he ordered him sharply to lay down his arms and confine himself to his spiritual functions. John also directed the Bishop of Lombez to proceed at once to Rome and endeavour to compose the quarrel; this was the real reason why he could not keep his promise of waiting for Petrarch. There can be little doubt that the Pope would not have thus disowned

[1] Villani (who is strangely followed by Fracassetti), asserts that the leader of the Colonna and (according to him) the contriver of the ambush was "Stefanuccio," the grandson of Sciarra, who had died in 1329. This youth, who could not then have reached manhood, was not known to P., even by reputation, at the time; and the address of P.'s letter, "Stephano Juniori," with the veiled reference in *F.* III. 3 (see p. 394) to his sonnet, "Vinse Annibal," proves conclusively that the victor was the elder son of old Stefano.

and reproved his own legate, if he had not been convinced that the Orsini were the aggressors.

The first conflict took place nearly three months before the return of Petrarch from his northern tour; but the issue and the full details may not have been known at Avignon when he reached the city. He forthwith composed his fine sonnet, "Vinse Annibal,"[1] addressed to the victor, warning him not, like Hannibal, to dally with his success and so make it fruitless, but to attack "the she-bear and cubs" in their lair. He accompanied the poem with a prose Latin letter,[2] in which he compares Stefano to Theodosius making head with inferior forces against the pretender Eugenius (September 8, 394). By the latter is apparently meant the Orsini legate, who is described as a "lamb become a wolf, a clerk become a tyrant, to which the oppressed and plundered churches of Italy bear witness." It is less certain who is intended by "the boy reborn from the blood of the slain,[3] laden with the spoils of the Church, who will afford booty rather than need a beating."[4] Petrarch bids his young hero go on to certain victory, trusting not in his own strength but in Divine aid. He quotes Claudian[5] to prove that the "very elements" will fight on his side.

The letter scarcely deserves to be quoted entire, for it harps upon the single string that an incomplete victory is no victory at all; the victor must press it home in Cæsar's fashion, and not rest upon his oars. Petrarch develops the theme with his usual wealth of examples—the misfortunes of Pompey and the republic generally after the transient success at Dyrrachium; the death of Cyrus caused by a foe whom he had just defeated,[6] and of Alexander as the result of a banquet, not of war; finally, the murder of Agamemnon and of Africanus the younger after successful campaigns at the hands of their impious wives.[7] He admits that this display of erudition is not strictly *ad rem;* but

[1] S. 82.

[2] *F.* III. 3.

[3] De Sade (I. 228) doubtfully conjectures "Lubertielli" (Roberto), son of Bertoldo Orsini.

[4] "Prædam verius scito esse quam prælium" (Frac. I. 143).

[5] *De Tert. Cons. Honorii*, 96–98.

[6] This is Herodotus' account of the end of Cyrus which, though now discredited, was borrowed by P. from Justin.

[7] The parallel between Agamemnon and the younger Africanus seems to be original; but the guilt of the latter's wife, Sempronia, is more than doubtful; Cicero speaks positively of Carbo as the murderer.

he wishes to enforce the truth that even victors have much to fear. In a second and shorter letter [1] he tells Stefano that he had sent him another poem—a kind of cento composed of lines of his own alternating with others from Latin poets [2]—under the impression that it was his own invention, but he now finds that others have carried out the same idea. This composition he has not preserved, and perhaps the world is no poorer. His partisan intervention in these feuds of the nobles is the more remarkable since in later life he would have impartially condemned both sides. It may be that both poem and letter were chiefly for the Bishop's eye; and the poet may have been unwilling to exclude them from his published works merely because he had changed his political views.

If we assume with some commentators [3] that Bishop Giacomo is addressed in the noble second Canzone ("O aspettata in ciel") he may have been dispatched to Italy by the Pope in the double capacity of peacemaker between the nobles and the fomenter of warlike enthusiasm in Italy for a new crusade. The Pope probably found in Philip of Valois, who ascended the French throne in 1328, a less complaisant neighbour than his two predecessors. Just as Clement V. planned a crusade in order to avert the too persistent attentions of Philip the Fair, so John was anxious to engage the young French king in a similar chimerical project. The age of the Crusades was definitely over; but they were too convenient a means of employing the martial ardour of the Christian States for the Popes to recognize the fact. The plan appealed to the chivalrous temper of Philip. In 1332 he made certain proposals to the Pope as the conditions of his taking the cross. These were: 1. The absolute disposal of the Papal treasure supposed to be laid up for the purpose; 2. A grant of a tenth from all the benefices of Christendom for

[1] *F.* III. 4.

[2] Carducci (*Rime di F. P.* p. 17) gives an example, from a Bologna MS. containing poems attributed to P., of an incomplete sonnet of this kind referring to another subject.

[3] C. II. 70–72. The most ancient interpreters, misled by the "novo Carlo," dated it in 1345, and some, as Vellutello and Gesualdo, supposed it was addressed to Pope Clement VI. The later date is now given up; Marsand (who is followed by Carducci) first suggested the Bishop of Lombez as its recipient. Leopardi (1845) conjectured Enea Tolomei, and he is apparently followed by Mestica (in *Le Rime di F. P.*, 1896, p. 43), who, however, gives no reason for the attribution.

ten years; 3. A cession to himself of all Church appointments in his realm for three years; 4. The revival of the kingdom of Arles in favour of his son; 5. The kingdom of Italy for his brother, the Duc d'Alencon.[1] These demands fairly took away the breath of the Pope and the Sacred College, who returned a vague and frigid reply. In the same autumn the published intention of the Pope to remove to Italy was perhaps meant as an intimation to Philip that he had gone too far; in fact, he soon reduced his terms to a grant of a tenth for six years. In a consistory of July 26, 1333, the Pope "proclaimed" the crusade, the departure of which he provisionally fixed for 1336. On October 30[2] the French king, with the monarchs of Bohemia and Navarre, received the cross at the hands of the Archbishop of Rouen[3]; and he afterwards held a Council, in which he bound himself to embark for Syria in three years, or at least to send his son John. He was careful to provide that if his intentions should be frustrated by circumstances, his excuse was to be judged not by the Pope, but by three French prelates. He also made the curious suggestion, which the Pope did not approve, that the French prelates should take the cross in order to attract volunteers, but without any intention of proceeding on the crusade.

The dominant topic at Avignon in the autumn of 1333 was thus the marshalling of the Christian hosts against the infidel. Petrarch shared in the common enthusiasm, and addressed the following sonnet[4]—as some say, but without internal evidence—to the lords and peoples of Italy, urging them to support the project.[5]

"The high successor of our Charles,[6] whose hair
The crown of his great ancestor adorns,
Already has ta'en arms, to bruise the horns
Of Babylon, and all her name who bear,

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[1] Raynaldus, *sub anno* 1332.

[2] Christophe (II. 24) gives the date of 1332 for these proceedings; but apparently in error. The King would not take the cross till after the Pope's proclamation.

[3] Pierre Roziers, afterwards Clement VI.

[4] S. 23. T. Okey (*Avignon*, Mediæval Towns Series, p. 85) says that this sonnet and Canzone II. were written by P. at the request of the Pope. The fact is possible, but evidence for it is lacking.

[5] De Sade thinks it may have been addressed to the Colonna family; but what, then, was the lamb? I have put "your" in the last line for "thy"—an evident mistake.

[6] Charlemagne, regarded as King of France, not as Holy Roman Emperor.

Christ's holy vicar, with the honoured load
Of keys and cloak, returning to his home,
Shall see Bologna and our noble Rome,
If no misfortune bar his further road.
Best to your meek and highborn lamb [1] belongs
To beat the fierce wolf down, so may it be
With all who love and loyalty deny!
Console at length your waiting country's wrongs
And Rome's, who longs once more her spouse to see
And gird for Christ the good sword on your thigh."

MACGREGOR.

Petrarch has attempted a much higher flight in the second Canzone, addressed to a friend who was to preach the crusade in Italy. After a fine exordium describing the gathering of the Christian host from Norway to the shores of Greece, he appeals to his friend to awaken with his eloquence their common native land.

"It were small wonder if Ausonia see,
Collecting at thy call, her children bold
Lifting the spear of Jesus joyfully.
Nor if our ancient mother judge aright
Doth her rich page unfold
Such noble cause in any former fight." [2]

The closing stanzas, which Macaulay considers magnificent,[3] on the exploits of Ancient Greece against the Persians seem little related to the subject, though conceived in the vein of the loftiest poetry. Even our poet's over-fondness for displaying his erudition cannot injure, much less destroy, his marvellous lyrical gift.

The ode illustrates the position of Petrarch as a link between mediæval and modern times, between the age of Faith and the age of Reason. His anti-pagan fervour [4] was thrown away, for the project never came to fruition. Not only were the masses apathetic, but the French king, whose ardour was genuine, found his relations with England suddenly disturbed. He was also much dissatisfied with the Pope's views on the Beatific Vision of God, as related in the last chapter. The year 1334—the last of

[1] Carducci (*Rime di F. P.* p. 20) is inclined to identify "the lamb" with Florence, because it was the ensign of the Wool Merchants there. But P. is addressing not one, but several, as the plural number shows. It seems much more simple to suppose that the lamb is the Church.

[2] From an admirable translation by an anonymous lady, Miss . . . (not Lady Dacre), in Foscolo's *Essays on Petrarch* (1823), pp. 319–325.

[3] *Miscellaneous Works* (Popular edition, 1889), p. 49.

[4] P.'s views on the necessity for a crusade are expressed at length in his long letter of June 29, 1366, to Pope Urban V. (*Sen.* VII. 1). He there says (B. ed. p. 912) that the only excuse for delay is impotence, which is not sufficient, if it is caused by divisions among Christians.

the Pope's life, in which his Italian schemes crumbled to nothing and his hope of superseding Louis in Germany was frustrated—witnessed a veritable storm on this really unimportant question of theology. The Pope, who had expressed his opinion in sermons between 1329 and 1332, was anxious to obtain the support of the University of Paris, which, however, declared decisively against him in December, 1333. The Paris Doctors averred that if the saints were not in heaven, their intercessions were unavailing and all petitions for their prayers useless. The "Most Christian King" requested John in respectful terms [1] to abandon such speculations, because it belonged to the Head of the Church rather to terminate disputes on the faith than to provoke them. Robert of Naples wrote in the same sense. Not only were the Dominicans up in arms, but Michael of Cesena, the deposed General of the Franciscans, arrived at Paris to fan the opposition to a flame. It is said that the "Spirituals" in Germany formed a conspiracy with Cardinal Napoleon Orsini, the Pope's mortal foe, to summon a General Council, in which John should be condemned as a heretic. The Pope took alarm, and protested that he had spoken not as Pontiff, but as a private theologian on a question hitherto left undetermined by the Church. He made a study of a treatise written at his request by the Cistercian Cardinal Fournier, which maintained views opposed to his own. At length, on December 3, 1334, feeling himself mortally ill, he summoned the cardinals to his bedside and ordered the reading of what his enemies called a "tepid recantation," in which he humbly submitted to the decree of the Church and left the matter to be formally determined by his successor. On the following morning he expired at the age of ninety, after a pontificate of eighteen years.

His character has been already sketched; all that needs to be added is that the word "failure" is writ large over all the objects which he had most at heart. In the twenty-two folio volumes of his Register there are said to be 65,000 Bulls and Briefs —a number which has been invoked as a proof of his energy and industry. These qualities have never been denied to him; but

[1] The statement made by P. D'Ailly in 1406 (in an address to the French clergy) that Philip threatened to have John burned at the stake if he did not retract is improbable, unless the threat was merely uttered in private conversation.

the multiplicity of such documents might be held to show that the government of the Church was over-centralized. Pope John was buried in the Cathedral of Nôtre Dame des Doms; and a sumptuous monument with Gothic sculptures and a richly decorated canopy was erected over his remains. In 1759 the tomb was moved from the church to its present position in the vestibule of the sacristy; it was much damaged thirty-four years later in the disorders of the Revolution, and many sculptures have disappeared; but it has since been twice restored.

Within ten days of the Pope's death the Conclave opened (December 13) in the Dominican convent at Avignon, which was strictly guarded from the outside world by the Comte de Noailles, governor of the Papal County Venaissin, and by the Seneschal of Provence on behalf of King Robert. There were twenty-four cardinals, of whom six were Italians; these, under the direction of Cardinal Colonna, made it their aim to secure a candidate outside their own ranks who would restore the Papacy to Rome. Their choice was the Cardinal de Comminges, Bishop of Porto, who would certainly have been elected, but the French party under the Cardinal Talleyrand-Périgord insisted on his giving a pledge that he would not return to Rome. The candidate manfully replied that, rather than be so bound, he would resign the Cardinalate also. He was at once deserted by his compatriots; and at the next scrutiny the cardinals gave their votes with unconcerted unanimity for the Cistercian Cardinal Fournier, who was considered to have no chance. All were surprised, but none more than the Pope-elect, who, according to Villani's story, blurted out, "My Lords, you have elected an ass!" The deed, however, was done; and the new Pope, who took the title of Benedict XII., was crowned in the Dominican church on January 8. After this ceremony followed that of the "cavalcata," in which the red-hatted cardinals—many of them of princely birth—mounted on black palfreys, escorted the humble monk of their unintentional choice on a white palfrey to the Pontifical Palace.

Jacques Nouveau, called "Fournier" from his father's occupation, had been generally known as "the White Cardinal" from his continuing to wear the Cistercian habit after his elevation to the purple. He was the son of a miller at Saverdun in the county of Foix, and had been sent by an uncle, a Cistercian abbot, to

the University of Paris, in which he reached the grade of Doctor and gave lectures in theology. In 1317 he was made Bishop of Pamiers, where he so recommended himself to Pope John by his zeal as an Inquisitor that ten years later he was made Cardinal of St. Prisca. He was a man of blunt manners, but of simple piety, entirely devoid of personal ambition and of diplomatic finesse. The strong contrast in this respect between himself and his predecessor was something like the contrast noted in our own day between Leo XIII. and Pius X. Benedict was, perhaps, *mutatis mutandis*, more learned than the latter, but equally a stranger to the arts of a statesman. The contrast between him and John extended even to outward appearance ; for the new Pope was tall, of a fine figure and ruddy complexion, with a remarkably loud voice. It was soon seen that he was to be a reformer of abuses. On January 10—two days after his coronation—notice was given to all bishops and ecclesiastics with cure of souls then visiting Avignon that they must return to their flocks before the Feast of the Purification. He was strongly opposed to the nepotism of the last reign, saying that " the Pope ought to be like Melchizedek, without father, mother, or family tree." One of his nephews, who was hastening to the Papal city, received a hint that if he came, he would lose the good graces of his uncle. Benedict was particularly anxious to prevent the advancement to benefices of youthful or unlearned clergy, and his frequent lament was that the learned were so few. It is therefore significant that one of his first appointments—at the solicitation of Cardinal Colonna—was to collate Francesco Petrarca on January 25, 1335, to a canonry in his friend's cathedral at Lombez. The Brief,[1] which speaks of his knowledge of letters and excellent moral character, alludes to the fact that he was not yet beneficed, and promises him a prebend in the same church on the first vacancy.

It seems to have occurred to Cardinal Colonna, who so strongly advocated the return to Rome, that Petrarch's talents would be useful in influencing the new Pope in that direction. The Cardinal was aware that Benedict, naturally disposed to peace and concession, was profoundly troubled at the state of Italy, and, above all, of Rome. One of his first acts was to make a gift of 50,000 florins for the restoration of St. Peter's and St. John

[1] See the text in De Sade (t. III., *Pièces Justificatives*, No. XV., pp. 47, 48).

Lateran, which had fallen into decay. In July an embassy from the Romans appeared in Avignon to entreat the Pope to restore the Holy See to Rome. Probably before the envoys were heard in the Curia,[1] a Latin poem [2] of 226 hexameters was submitted to the Pontiff, professing to be an appeal from the city, represented as an elderly matron, to him as her spouse to return to her embrace. The metaphor was obviously a difficult one to handle, especially as the poet, reckless of bigamy, dares to refer to the Emperor as another spouse, now a wanderer and a fugitive, whom Germany holds in durance vile. The distressed lady complains that she is embarrassed by suitors (Robert of Naples and the barons may perhaps be meant) and that the populace is wont to tell her in mockery that her true spouse has found other mistresses! At length the metaphor has to give way to the scholastic figure of the two lights, the sun and moon, for the Papacy and Empire. "I consoled myself," she laments, "with one light (the Papacy) while I could; now I am deprived of both." Then, waxing bolder —still in the name of Rome—the poet refers to the order to bishops to return to their sees, and refuses to believe the Pope will deny to his own people the rights which he grants to foreigners. This is indeed plain speaking, but another weapon remains. The Pope had recently suffered from a dangerous illness,[3] during which he expressed a desire that if he died, his body should be taken to Rome and buried in St. Peter's. If he was anxious for his bones to rest there, he will surely go in person now that his life has been restored. There was some suspicion that, after all, Bologna might be the favoured spot; and the poet hints at his fears on this head with a graceful play on words, which must have caused amusement:

> "Defer not thou my joy—I trembling beg—
> Distracted by the pleasures of the way;

[1] De Sade (I. 268) suggests that the canonry was given in recognition of the talent shown in the poem. But this is scarcely possible, as the Brief is dated within five weeks of the Pope's accession, and the poem alludes to several early events of his pontificate. Rossetti (III. 247) would postpone it a year or two for that reason; but this is an error in the opposite direction, for the second (and later) letter was evidently written early in the next year; July or August, 1335, is a likely date. Rossetti's view that P. went to Rome in 1335 and that the poem shows traces of his visit is demonstrably false.

[2] *Ep. Metr.* I. ii.

[3] This is not mentioned by any historian, but supports the date suggested above, since it must have occurred early in 1335.

Though on her threshold ' Janua ' [1] welcome thee,
Or, farther on, Placentia chance to please,
Or fair Bononia tempt thee with her boons ;
Though my own daughter, still more fair than these,
Florence with flowers entice, and countless more,
Slight not the charms of me, thine ancient spouse."

The skilful pleading of the poem, with its eloquent description of the Roman Empire, may have had some effect upon the Pontiff ; but the question was one on which the Sacred College was sharply divided, and the majority was altogether adverse. Before the Roman envoys departed in October, they had an audience of the Pope, in which his Holiness appeared to hear them with favour, but intimated that he could come to no determination, till he had considered and decided the pressing matter of the Beatific Vision. In the autumn he retired for that purpose to the neighbouring castle of Pont-sur-Sorgues,[2] and on January 29, 1336, issued a Bull, which decreed as a doctrine that the saints behold the Godhead, thus implicitly condemning the favourite opinion of his predecessor. Very soon—probably only a few weeks[3]—after this vexed question was set at rest, Petrarch addressed another letter [4] to the Pope—again in the person of the matron Rome—pressing for a favourable reply. It shows a great falling off from the first both in poetry and argument. There is a long digression on the inferiority of the exploits of other heroes to the deeds of Rome, which is artistically a mistake, and looks like a parade of erudition.[5] If Benedict was impressed at all, it must have been chiefly with the pedantry of his petitioner.

The fact is that in his eagerness for a universal peace, which he plainly expressed in one of his earliest Bulls, the Pope at first

[1] P. always uses this (the mediæval Latin) name for Genoa, taken from a fabulous tradition of its foundation by Janus, who, according to Cicero, gave his name to " janua," " a door." The ancient name was " Genua " ; and " Janua " first appears in the Lombard Luitprand during the tenth century.

[2] This Papal castle was north-east of Avignon, and not far from the junction of the Sorgues with the Rhone. Milman (*Latin Christianity*, VII. 438) curiously fancies that it was near to Vaucluse and the source of that stream.

[3] Probably in February or March, 1336, as Magrini (p. 76) supposes. De Sade (I. 333, 334) strangely imagines that this letter was written at Rome in 1337.

[4] *Ep. Metr.* I. v.

[5] There are many slips in prosody in the list of proper names (as Pisistrātus, Perīcles, Philŏpœmen, Alcībiades), but with P.'s ignorance of Greek it is a wonder there are not more. Adonis is called " Cinigerum " instead of " Cinyradem " ; but here the mistake may be due to the folio editors or to P.'s MSS.

really hoped to return to Rome and put an end to the "Babylonish captivity" in France. With an ignorance of the world natural to a simple monk, he unfolded these views on July 31, 1335, in a letter to Philip VI. of France. Even before this he had received ambassadors from the Emperor entreating absolution in almost abject terms; and Benedict, in his desire for a general peace, was inclined to comply. Philip therefore took a high tone with the Pope, who was anxious, as he knew, to send him off as soon as possible on crusade. He renewed the extravagant proposals he had made three years before to Pope John, and secretly employed the French cardinals to make a vehement opposition to the suggested return to Italy. The disturbed condition of Rome, in which the ruling families were fighting fiercely for the possession of the bridges,[1] put that city out of the question, although in the following January the Pope's legate, Bertrand of Embrun, induced them to swear to a two-years' truce. Benedict sent nuncios to Bologna to see if it might supply him with a safe refuge; but their report was that the people had become so turbulent since their expulsion of Cardinal du Pouget two years before that neither there nor in any other city of Romagna could he expect to enjoy security.

In all directions the Pope's excellent intentions were foiled by the legacy of hate bequeathed to him by his predecessor. Nowhere was this more evident than in the case of Louis of Bavaria. For their own purposes the King of France and the French cardinals in his pay were clamouring against any terms being made with a heretic and a rebel; and the Kings of Naples, Bohemia and Hungary joined in the protest. Yet thrice in Benedict's first fifteen months envoys from Germany were conferring with the Pope, who could not understand all this opposition to his granting pardon to "the penitent sinner." He accused the kings of trying to "destroy the Empire"; and when told it was merely Louis to whom they objected—a man almost without a friend—he replied shrewdly that no one had yet been able to deprive him of his crown. Disgusted at being thus crossed and at the Pope's threat to deprive him of the tenth already granted on Church incomes, Philip paid the Pontiff a visit in

[1] In September, 1335, the Orsini destroyed Ponte Molle. Stefano Colonna held four bridges; the rest were in the hands of his opponents, the Savelli. Gregorovius, VI. Pt. I. 195.

March, 1336, and stayed till after Easter, taking up his abode at Villeneuve in his own territory across the Rhone. He was accompanied or met by the Kings of Bohemia, Navarre and Aragon, with a crowd of lesser notabilities. A gay Lent it must have been at Avignon, for, in the words of Froissart,[1] "there were great fêtes and solemnities there." A stirring sermon by the Pope on Good Friday (March 29) revived the enthusiasm for the crusade. The four kings and many cardinals solemnly took the cross, and orders were actually given to provide a fleet of transports.[2]

But this had not been Philip's real object in coming. Partly by menaces against the estates of the cardinals in France, partly on the flimsy pretext that Louis was forming a German League against him, he procured the dismissal of the Imperial ambassadors. At the end of the year Louis proposed an alliance with Philip, if he would agree to the Pope's granting him absolution. Envoys from both sovereigns were at Avignon early in 1337; but Philip's pride would not allow him to support "the Bavarian's" request, and he received a plain warning from the Pope that he was driving the Emperor into an alliance with England, now on the eve of war with France. This was exactly what happened, although the Pope thought it his duty to warn Edward III. against concluding such an alliance. But the English king was warmly encouraged even by his clergy to disregard these remonstrances on account of the patent subservience of Benedict to Philip; and a compact, offensive and defensive, was formed between England and the Empire in August, 1337. Louis, wearied at length of making humiliating offers of submission at Avignon, now threatened to march there and extort absolution by military force. The Pope's policy in this matter of "letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would'" excited keen resentment in Germany. In March, 1338, the clergy of that country sent envoys to Avignon demanding the reconciliation of their sovereign with the Church; but the Pope refused to receive

[1] Froissart, *Chroniques*, Lib. I. c. 60, 61.

[2] I have followed de Sade, Cochin and the Italian commentators in dating P.'s Crusade poems (S. 23 and C. II.) in 1333. But I am far from certain that they were not written in Lent, 1336. In favour of this is the allusion to the Pope as Rome's "spouse" in l. 13 of the sonnet. The chief argument against it is that Benedict was so busy in building his palace that few could suppose he intended to return to Italy. But could P. really have believed that John would do so?

them, though supposed to be in sympathy with their request. During the same year Diets of the Empire were held at four different places, in the third of which, on July 16, at Rense, near Coblentz, six of the seven [1] Electors solemnly agreed that the Pope had assailed their rights and liberties; that the Imperial dignity was derived from God alone; and that an Emperor, whom they had freely elected, needed no approbation or confirmation from the Holy See. The Dominicans, who respected the Pope's ban, were expelled from their convents at Frankfort. On September 3, at a Coblentz Diet, at which Edward of England was present, Louis appointed that sovereign his Imperial vicar in the Low Countries, and the two allies sent their common defiance to the King of France.

It is said that the Pope made merry [2] in private over the discomfiture of his royal patron or gaoler. But in public he could only express his sorrow at the union of England with the heretic "Bavarian," and continue his fruitless efforts at mediation. Philip was beginning to see the error of his policy towards Louis; and the Emperor who, in spite of his brave acts, desired above all absolution and recognition by the Pope, was very soon secretly negotiating with France. He sent a contingent to Edward's army in the ravaging campaign of 1339 around Cambrai, for which that king was severely reproved by the Pope (November 13); but even Edward's great naval success at Sluys (June 13, 1340) did not prevent the early defection of Louis from the alliance. In January, 1341, Philip succeeded in making a compact with him, on condition of French support to his reconciliation with the Pope. The condition was fulfilled, but in half-hearted fashion and with a secret hope—indeed a certainty—of failure. The Pope drily replied to Philip's envoy that he could not, at the King's good pleasure, one day hold Louis a heretic and the next acclaim him as orthodox; Louis must make complete submission and undergo due penance. The historian Albert of Strasburg, to whom we owe this account, had previously been sent to Avignon with the unpalatable resolutions of the Diet of Rense; and in an interview with Benedict he had the hardihood to remind him that his recent disposition towards Louis had been much less severe. The Pope could only reply with a smile that

[1] John of Bohemia alone was absent.
[2] "Multum jocundabatur." Albert Argentin of Strasburg, p. 128.

in that case the prince had returned evil for good. Louis soon gave fresh offence to the Papacy by presuming on his own authority to dissolve a marriage [1] in order that the lady might be united to his own son. The proceeding was utterly irregular, and shocked the moral sense of Europe; but the Pope had only his own unyielding attitude to blame for this open flouting of his authority.

It has been well remarked [2] that this long and sordid struggle with the Empire, which was continued under Clement VI., gave the Avignon Papacy a delusive sense of power. The Popes should have recognized the revolt of Germany as a storm-signal; and the abject humiliation of Louis gave them a chance, which they never took, of retreating from an impossible position. Instead of being regarded as the spiritual arbiter of Europe, the Papacy began to be looked upon as a separate, half-secular state, with temporal interests of its own to serve, which at the moment was "in the pocket" of the King of France. It was matter of common knowledge in Europe that Benedict saw the danger and was willing to avert it; and his want of success did his authority far more harm than would have been done by judicious concession. His defence must be that he was not free, and that external pressure from Philip, together with the internal intrigues of the French cardinals, perpetually shackled his action. He lacked either the will or the power to break his chains and take up a really impartial attitude.

In one sphere at least he was able to reverse the disastrous policy of his predecessor. In Italy he had no personal ends to serve; he took no side between Guelf and Ghibelline, or between Orsini and Colonna. At Rome, in the July after Petrarch left it (1337), the lordship of the city was made over to the Pope for life, and he avoided John's mistake of attempting to govern through King Robert as his deputy. At this moment the Savelli had just attacked the Church of St. Angelo, of which Giovanni Colonna was cardinal, and had destroyed his palace. The Pope insisted on a three-years' peace, but only interfered with the government so far as to nominate the Senators. Villani describes the ensuing tranquillity as miraculous; and Benedict endeavoured

[1] That of Margaret Maultasch, Duchess of Carinthia, with the son of King John.

[2] Creighton, *History of the Papacy*, I. p. 51.

to confirm it by forbidding the neighbouring cities to send troops to Rome. When Florence, in 1337, sent some of her citizens to remodel the institutions of the republic, the Pope at once protested, and the strangers had to disappear; he would not have the city become a hotbed of Guelf intrigue.

In Lombardy and Romagna he had less success; but the state of affairs when he became Pope was peculiar. The Guelf cities, under the leadership of Florence, still maintained the alliance with the Ghibelline chieftains of Lombardy, which had been formed against John of Bohemia; but the former were rapidly growing tired of an arrangement, under which they furnished most of the funds, while their allies carried off all the spoil. The ablest of these lords, Mastino della Scala of Verona, was a man wholly without scruple, whose supreme aim was his own aggrandizement. On June 21, 1335, he ejected from Parma the Guelf family of the Rossi, to whom King John had sold it; and at the end of the same year he seized Lucca, which the Florentines regarded as their rightful prey. In the matter of Parma both the Rossi and Mastino appealed to the Pope, who claimed a feudal authority over the city [1]; and the lord of Verona, who had placed his uncle [2] Guido da Correggio there as his deputy, sent Azzo of the same family, with two lawyers, Guglielmo da Pastrengo and Guglielmo Arimondi, to plead his cause before the Pope in Consistory. In the autumn of 1335, when the suit came on, these envoys persuaded Petrarch, as one familiar with the ways of the Curia, to act as their principal and spokesman. The two exiled Rossi brothers, with another brother Ugolino, who was bishop of the city, conducted their own cause. All we know as to the result is that the young advocate was successful, and Mastino was confirmed in the lordship of the city.

The only authority for these details is a letter [3] of Petrarch in December, 1352, to Bishop Ugolino, whom he had then known personally for some years, though at the time of the suit he was

[1] The Pope claimed Parma as part of the legacy from the Countess Matilda, but the Emperor was his overlord; and it was probably under the claim to exercise the Imperial functions during a vacancy that Benedict now acted.

[2] Alboin, the father of Mastino, had married Beatrice, elder sister of the Correggi.

[3] *F.* IX. 5, dated December 28. Fracassetti suggests 1352, which is probable, though it might be 1351.

a stranger to him. To himself the consequences of this sudden incursion into public life were of some moment. Two of the Verona envoys, Azzo da Correggio and Guglielmo da Pastrengo, became his close personal friends ; and it was through the former that he was afterwards connected with the city of Parma, which he made his residence for some years. When he wrote to the Bishop, he had been Canon of the Cathedral for six years and Archdeacon for two. In that letter he says, with a pardonable confusion of cause and effect, that he was led to plead the cause of the Correggi by his great love for their family.[1] But in 1335 his acquaintance with Azzo, so far as we know, was recent, and the love was a subsequent growth. It is, however, likely enough that Petrarch, whose geese were always swans, was moved to play this unusual rôle by the attractions of his new friend. The most surprising thing is that, as an outsider and not a lawyer by profession, he was allowed by the Court to speak. Many years later he tells his friend Socrates that he had never learnt to frequent the tribunals, or to let out his tongue for hire.[2] But he impresses upon the Bishop that in this case he appeared rather as his friend's counsellor than as a professional advocate.[3] Yet he undoubtedly made a set speech ; for he reminds Ugolino that he stated his case with simple moderation, without allowing a sharp or unbecoming expression to pass his lips. It seems that the credit of the Correggi, as well as the power of Mastino, was involved in the affair. Azzo was accused of persuading his nephew Mastino to break faith with the Rossi and refuse performance of the conditions under which they had surrendered the city. The character of both men would lend support to the charge ; and possibly in the judgment these conditions, or some of them, were upheld, although the city was assigned to Mastino. The Rossi and Correggi—the former Guelfs and the latter Ghibellines —were hereditary foes in Parmesan affairs ; and their charges against each other would not be taken too seriously.

It was, perhaps, the conciliatory policy of Benedict towards the Ghibelline chiefs rather than the eloquence of Petrarch which

[1] In the letter last quoted (Frac. II. p. 24).

[2] Preface to *F.* (Frac. I. 17).

[3] *F.* IX. 5 (Frac. II. 24). "Defendi causam ipsam non patroni officio, sed amici." De Sade (I. 273) regards this as an explanation of the inconsistency with the passage last quoted. I should rather suppose that in the latter he forgot this single exception.

most contributed to the result of the trial. The weakness of "the Bavarian" impelled his Italian followers to desert him and accept the Papal fiction that the Empire was vacant. Mastino della Scala was created Papal vicar in his dominions; and other small "tyrannies" in the northern cities received express recognition. There were many in the Pope's entourage who considered this new policy mistaken, and even disastrous. It meant the desertion of Florence and the Guelf interest in Italy, over which the Popes had so long presided; and it could only result in an increase of power to the Ghibelline lords, of whom Mastino was the most formidable. In 1336 that despot was the master of nine important cities [1]—including Lucca, which he refused to deliver up to Florence. The great republic therefore contracted a league with Venice and the Visconti against Mastino; and in the ensuing campaign, in which Piero de' Rossi commanded the forces of the League, they took Padua and placed it under the rule of the family of Carrara. His power might have been entirely destroyed; but in 1338 he induced Venice to conclude a separate peace, to which Florence, though still without the coveted Lucca, was obliged to subscribe.

A revolution in Bologna had placed that newly enfranchised city in the hands of the Ghibelline Pepoli; the Pope consequently placed the city and University under an interdict, and summoned the leader, Taddeo Pepoli, to Avignon. He contrived, without obeying, to assure Benedict that he would maintain the Papal sovereignty over the city; and although the people refused to sign away their liberties, and the interdict was renewed, the Pope at length withdrew his extreme claims and nominated Pepoli as his vicar. These events, which occurred between 1337 and 1340, must have finally convinced Benedict that Bologna was no safe place of residence for a French Pontiff.

He had, indeed, recognized long before that he could neither settle in Italy, nor quit his position of subservience to Philip at Avignon. Though not actually within the French dominions, he was within a stone's throw of them; and he was quite unprotected, in the princely palace which John had left him, against any sudden attempt to secure his person. He therefore began, as early as April, 1335, to lay the foundations of the vast

[1] Verona, Padua, Vicenza, Treviso, Brescia, Feltre, Belluna, Parma, and Lucca. Villani, Lib. IX. c. 45.

fortress, the remains of which are still to be seen in the Provençal city. Though his reign lasted little more than seven years, Benedict, with the hoards of his predecessor at his command, was the greatest builder of all the Avignon Popes. The old episcopal palace, on the north and east sides of the present structure, was destroyed or remodelled, except the ancient chapel, the length of which was doubled, while it was adorned with fine frescoes. A strong tower with walls ten feet thick, now called the Tour des Anges, was next built in the south-east corner of the area. In the basement was the wine-cellar ; on the ground-floor the strong room containing the Papal treasures ; and above this the bedchamber, library and private apartments of the Pope. The summit on the fourth floor was occupied by a guard-room.

The buildings subsequently erected by Benedict were all to the north of this tower, on the northern and eastern sides of the present palace, between the Papal gardens and the cathedral of Nôtre Dame ; the later additions by Clement VI. and Urban V., including the main entrance, were on the south and west. The former were grouped round the cloisters of John's previous residence, which were rebuilt in order to support an upper floor. On the north was the old chapel, now enlarged ; in the western wing were the apartments of the household ; on the south was a great reception hall, where distinguished visitors were welcomed, and where the Pope was wont to receive the cardinals. Above this was a suite of chambers for the use of kings and other guests of rank. At the north-western angle was the Tour de la Campane, 150 feet high and with walls 12 feet thick, where the Pope's silver-toned bell was hung ; the north-eastern corner (detached from the cloister) was occupied by Benedict's last erection, the Tour de Trouillas,[1] twenty-five feet higher than its neighbour and having walls three feet thicker, which was subsequently the prison of Rienzi. Between this tower and the Tour des Anges lay the eastern wing, containing the Hall of Consistory, 135 feet by 12 feet, with the state dining-hall of the same dimensions above it. The great kitchen was north of this central space, and the Pope's private dining-room and oratory south of it, next to the Tour des Anges. The two great rooms in this wing had their windows glazed ; but those of the private apartments, and even of the rooms for exalted guests, were merely covered with white

[1] So called because it stood on the site of a wine-press (trullatium).

linen cloth. The whole structure, with its machicolations, narrow windows and battlemented walls, had much more the appearance of a fortress than of a peaceful residence. The gentle and sagacious L'Hôpital (1505–1573) observed with truth that for sheer size and costliness it is a marvel, but that it shows not a grain of art. The cardinals also built palaces ("golden houses" Petrarch calls them) [1] in imitation of their chief; but most of these were at Villeneuve in French territory across the Rhone, for the city did not afford sufficient space.

We can fancy the indignation of Petrarch at seeing the gradual erection of this vast building, which seemed to give a silent but uncompromising negative to his appeals for a return to Rome. In a work composed in the next reign [2] when the great pile was nearly complete, he says: "While we count and hoard our pelf, while we build in the latest Babylon superfluous and senseless towers that our pride, so soon to fall, may climb to heaven, there is no one to tend or champion the humble seat of Christ." In his view the vast fortress was nothing but a second Tower of Babel,[3] which merited, and would certainly incur, as signal a punishment from heaven as the first.

Benedict did not long enjoy the delusive security provided by the strong walls and lofty towers of his new palace. An open sore in his leg, rendered more serious by his plethoric habit and extreme corpulence, kept him long a prisoner to his room; and on April 25, 1342, he passed to his rest. He was buried in a chapel of Nôtre Dame founded by himself, where a sumptuous monument, which has now disappeared, was erected over his remains. His loss was mourned by the poor, to whom he was always generous; but few of the cardinals can have regretted his decease. His public policy was upright in intention, but deplorably lacking in decision and firmness. Though in theory absolute, he was hampered at every turn by opposition in the Sacred College and by the errors of his two predecessors. Yet he could be inflexible enough where his conscience was concerned.

[1] *Sen.* IX. 1 (to Urban V.) about 1365 (B. ed. p. 942).

[2] *Vit. Sol.* II. § iv. cap. 1 (composed in 1346). The three "anti-Babylonian" sonnets (105–107), the second of which speaks of "the proud towers, enemies of heaven," were perhaps written about the same time, though they may belong to his last two years at Avignon (1351–1353).

[3] *S. T.* 10—perhaps written in 1357.

When urged even by the King of France to adopt some doubtful course, he could reply: "I have only one soul which I am anxious not to lose: if I had two, I would gladly let you have one of them." He was a stern reformer of abuses in the Church, especially among the regular orders; and this fact is enough to account for the very unfavourable view of his character given by the monastic historians. He revised the constitutions of the Benedictine and Cistercian Orders, insisting upon greater strictness in the observance of their rules and upon the return to their convents of vagabond monks, who were a scandal to the faithful.[1] Though himself a monk, he was very unwilling to promote the regulars to high office; and he would have nothing to say to those who claimed his favour on the score of previous acquaintance. To such petitioners, he would reply roundly: "As Jacques Fournier I know you well, as Pope I know you not." He was rewarded by furious libels upon his character, which are unsupported from other sources. A bitter epigram describes him as "A Nero, deadly to the laity, a viper to the clergy, a cup full of wine."[2] The saying, "Bibamus papaliter" ("Let us drink like a Pope"), was ascribed to him. Another chronicler[3] says that he only did one good deed in his life, and that was to die. These libels were chiefly spread by the Mendicants, to whom he was severe; and it is said that the Dominicans gave him as much trouble as the Franciscans, who were the scourge of his predecessor.

Petrarch has left no passage which can be called incontestably[4]

[1] Mollat (pp. 76–79) says that his new constitutions failed in reforming the Orders, since they were too strict and lacked breadth of view.

[2] "Iste fuit Nero, laicis mors, vipera clero,
Devius a vero, cuppa repleta mero."—BALUZE (*Vitæ*), I. col. 240.

[3] A mendicant friar, quoted in André (*op. cit.*), p. 268.

[4] I cannot persuade myself that de Sade (II. Note XV. pp. 13–16) succeeds in proving that *S. T.* 1, was written in 1342, and refers to Benedict. It was evidently written to the Bishop of Cavaillon, and just after the death of a Pope. We know that P. sent such a letter to the Bishop on December 13, 1352—five days after the death of Clement VI. (*F.* XV. 12)—and that it contained such animadversions on the deceased Pope that P. begged to have it returned at once, which was done on the same day (*F.* XV. 13). No other such letter has survived; and *S. T.* 1, exactly answers to the description, except for one or two details about the Pope, as that he was ignorant and of low birth. Ignorance, except perhaps of political finesse, could hardly be charged against Benedict, while Clement was notoriously ignorant of scholarship. I do not think P.'s expression, "Quanto felicius patrio sulcasset aratro," need imply that his Pope was of low birth.

a sketch of Benedict's character ; if he had, it would hardly have been more favourable than the above-quoted vituperations of the regulars. He must have known the Pope well ; but he would judge him from the standpoint of a patriotic Italian, who had little patience with any French Pope, especially with one who had done so much to anchor the Papacy at Avignon. In a letter of his old age [1] he tells a story of Benedict, which illustrates both his supposed fondness for the pleasures of the table [2] and his ignorance of Italy. The Pope had been presented with a catch of magnificent eels from the Lake of Bolsena near Viterbo, and gave orders that they should be distributed among the cardinals, reserving only a small portion for himself. A few days later, on giving audience to the Princes of the Church and receiving their thanks, he remarked in jest, " If I had tasted them first, and known their quality, I should not have been so generous ; but I never thought Italy could produce anything so good." Whereat Cardinal Colonna's patriotism flared up, and with his usual freedom of speech he expressed his astonishment that so learned a man, who had read so much, should be unaware that all the produce of Italy was excellent. The fact that Petrarch should retail this story after thirty years to another French Pope (Urban V.) gives proof, if proof were needed, that his own prejudice in favour of Italy was as strong as Benedict's prejudice against it.

Clement was the son of a country gentleman ; and all that P. need mean is that it would have been better for him to continue in that position. It is very doubtful whether either P. or the Bishop were in Provence in April, 1342.

[1] *Sen.* VII. 1 (June 29, 1366) ; B. ed. p. 904.

[2] That P. should speak of his Pope in *S. T.* 1, as " vino madidus " has been regarded as proof that he refers to Benedict ; but the latter's fondness for drink depends only upon the assertion of his enemies, and Clement VI., whom P. treats very freely in Eclogues VI. and VII., was given to luxurious living. See Ecl. VI. 63.

CHAPTER XI

PECULIARITIES OF PETRARCH'S CHARACTER; FRIENDSHIP AND CORRESPONDENCE

THE character of Petrarch has been sometimes represented as a bundle of contradictions; and undoubtedly there was an element of weakness in it which often accompanies poetic genius. He has described his instability in the 104th Sonnet, where he attributes it to his hopeless love.

"Warfare I cannot wage, yet know no peace;
I fear, I hope—I burn, I freeze again—
Mount to the skies, then bow to earth my face—
Grasp the whole world, yet nothing can obtain.
* * * *
I scorn existence, and yet court its stay;
Detest myself, and for another burn;
By grief I'm nurtured, and though tearful, gay;
Death I despise, and life alike I hate;
Such, lady, dost thou make my wayward state."[1]—NOTT.

But the evil was more deep-seated than he imagined. It clung to him to his last hour, long after his lady had quitted the earth. Such a string of antitheses as the above may describe, but fails to explain it; and one of his biographers, Professor Bartoli, in the course of a merciless catalogue of Petrarch's inconsistencies, develops the same antithetic strain.

"Take him in the inmost chronicle of his thoughts, in his feelings, in his works, you will find him ever restless, insatiable, cut in twain by diverse desires and hopes and needs, constant only in his own inconstancy, firm only in his incessant love of change. He travels, and would like to rest—he rests, and would like to travel; he is free, and seeks subservience—he is unfree, and sighs for liberty; he is a man, and would wish to be a saint—he is a saint, and needs to become a man once more."[2]

[1] This sonnet ("Pace non trovo") has been closely imitated by Sir Thomas Wyatt (1513–1542), whose rendering should be compared with the above.

[2] A. Bartoli, *Storia della Letteratura Italiana*, t. VII. (*Francesco Petrarca*, p. 29. Florence, 1884).

The list might have been—indeed, by the same author has been—made much longer. The mystery, which is left unexplained, is how a man so volatile, so infirm of purpose, so much the sport of his own feelings, managed not only to leave a strong impress upon future ages, but to be almost idolized by a large circle of far differently constituted friends, who knew him personally, and could mark his every weakness.

There is no need to conjecture—as, without a scrap of evidence, Lombroso has done—that Petrarch was an epileptic subject. Alike in his strength and in his weakness, he is vividly and intensely human—a strange compound of sense and sensibility, of the masculine and feminine temperaments. Perhaps what most offends a modern reader is the wide discrepancy between his precepts and his practice. His philosophy is that of an austere Stoic, his scheme of life almost Epicurean. He is always prescribing a temper of mind and a line of conduct which he never seems able to follow. The phenomenon is common enough; but there is truth in Dr. Johnson's emphatic contention [1] that there is no necessary connexion between principles and practice.

> "Video meliora, proboque;
> Deteriora sequor." [2]

The preacher lays special stress on those moral maxims, which he finds hardest to carry into effect; but his personal frailties are no fair argument against the truth of his teaching. Petrarch had enemies in plenty, especially after he had risen to fame, who pointed to the contrast with scorn; yet his friends seem scarcely to have noticed it, so completely were they under the spell of his personal charm.

How great that charm was could only have been fully conveyed to us by a contemporary memoir, written by one of the many friends to whom he had opened his heart. Unfortunately, no such memoir exists; but in the letters of his friend Francesco Nelli [3] we have many touches, which would have formed part of

[1] October 25, 1773. In Boswell's *Journal of the Hebrides Tour* (1786), pp. 374, 375.

[2] Ovid, *Met.* VII. 21. Cf. P.'s imitation of this in the last line of C. XXI. ("I' vo pensando"):

> "E veggio 'l meglio ed al peggior m' appiglio."

[3] *Un Ami de Pétrarque; Lettres de Francesco Nelli à P.* By Henry Cochin (Paris, 1892).

the lost picture. The poet's character, as we have hitherto sketched it, may seem somewhat lacking in dignity and self-respect. Yet these were the very qualities which chiefly impressed Nelli,[1] when he heard him recite poetry (probably his own) at Florence in 1350 before a critical but not unsympathetic audience. Such an occasion is a pretty severe test of the nerves of any poet; but making every allowance for his admirer's enthusiasm, we can see that Petrarch went through the ordeal with flying colours, managing to be impressive without eccentricity, and dignified without any affectation of superiority. His chief defect is supposed to be his inordinate vanity, which was doubtless fed by the incense of his friends' admiration. Yet his letters prove that, unlike most vain men, he had so large-hearted a sympathy and so delicate a tact as to exercise an almost magnetic attraction upon his intimate friends.

This remarkable fact should never be disregarded—though it often has been—in a general estimate of Petrarch's character. His self-love was that of a man who, living much alone and conscious of high intellectual power, was incessantly occupied with his own personality; and since he habitually "wore his heart upon his sleeve," he could not prevent his preoccupation with himself from constantly appearing in his writings. This self-consciousness, though not an admirable trait, was wholly different from the "swelled head" seen in some modern writers who have suddenly become public favourites. It is far removed from the sublime charity which "seeketh not her own"; but yet it does not "vaunt itself" by comparison with others, and is more fitly described as self-absorption than self-conceit. I take it that, when Petrarch says in the *Epistle to Posterity*,[2] "I was conscious of pride in others, never in myself," he means the kind of pride which exalts itself at others' expense and despises lesser men—in short, what is generally termed "arrogance." It is the latter which is the deadly foe to friendship, because he who shows it regards himself as a "king among men," and kings can have no friends, but only subjects.

Petrarch, however, had a very high ideal of friendship, which

[1] Letter XIII. (*op. cit.* p. 206).

[2] Frac. I. 3. "Sensi superbiam in aliis, non in me." The rest of the sentence is assuredly untrue—"et cum parvus fuerim, semper minor meo judicio fui."

he not only preached, but practised; for, so far as we know, he never lost a friend through a quarrel, or dropped one by neglect. In a very late letter [1] to one of his oldest friends—almost the last of them then left to him—he asserts that he was by nature more inclined to friendship than to anything else; and he closes the same letter by saying that, next to the joy in God and in virtue which he rather aspires after than claims to possess, he knows no greater joy than that which comes from faithful and honourable friendship. This is no mere rhetoric; he has proved it by the witness of his whole life. But it must not be taken to mean that there were no gradations in his friendships. Few men of letters, who have spent as much time in solitude and study, have had so many friends—and these not mere "acquaintances," but men who in various degrees and from different standpoints had won his affection and received his confidence. A few—perhaps a dozen at most, which is a large number as most men are constituted—were admitted to the "penetralia" of the temple; others, in a descending scale, occupied its outer courts; but all were made to feel that they had a place not merely in his esteem, but in his heart.

This radiating expansiveness in a man by nature self-absorbed is a psychological puzzle; it testifies to a personal charm which is never exercised by the merely selfish. We can fancy it wielded by Shakespeare (in spite of our ignorance of his surroundings) as it certainly was by Scott, and even to some extent by Goldsmith and by Charles Lamb; but never by Voltaire or Rousseau or Byron or Carlyle or Wordsworth. Petrarch was in many respects so different from the age in which he lived that we should expect to find him misunderstood, or even contemned by it. Of that age he says himself,[2] "I have always found it so distasteful that had it not been for the love of those dear to me I should have preferred to have been born in any other." Perhaps the secret of his attraction was that he was not merely what Matthew Arnold calls "interesting," but affectionate and sympathetic—what Dr. Johnson would have styled a "clubable" man. And, strange to say, this charm still breathes in his letters, despite the disadvantage of a dead language and the vicissitudes of six hundred years.

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 4 (Frac.), to Philip, Cardinal of Sabina.
[2] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. 4).

It was a true remark of M. Henry Cochin,[1] one of the chief "Petrarchists" of our day, that his personal magnetism still survives; he is to this day a cementer of friendships between his admirers, as he was in his lifetime.

Petrarch founded his philosophy of friendship on the advice of Cicero in the dialogue *De Amicitiâ*. Like him, he considered that true friendship could only exist between the good.[2]

"Friendship," he says,[3] "is founded on virtue, and to preserve it nothing is needed but mutual love. Its features are simple and need no paint; it has no ulterior end in view. If it finds profit which it has not sought—and who can reckon its benefits and delights?—yet its love requires no stimulus; content with itself, it is its own spur and its own reward."

In the same letter he says that the man who cultivates it for his own interest, is no friend, but an impostor, who deals in lies, as "costumiers" in rouge. "Friendship only seeks for a return; a true friend has no thought but for his friend."

These ideas may have been taken originally from Cicero's dialogue, but they are not mere classical reminiscences; Petrarch has thoroughly assimilated them, and his sincerity is proved by his appeal to his own experience and practice. At Vaucluse, when his friends paid their rare visits, he gave up whole days to walking with them in the woods[4]; and the conversation was so lively that the times for meals were ignored or forgotten. Yet Petrarch delighted in hospitality, and would never willingly, he says, take food without the presence of a friend. While not approving of banquets,[5] he fully recognized that the festive board promoted

"The feast of reason and the flow of soul."

But he agreed with the opinion of Varro that on these occasions the company should not fall below the number of the Graces (three) or exceed that of the Muses (nine).[6] When enjoying the

[1] In his address to the Cornell students at Paris on June 26, 1915. See *Catalogue of the* (*Fiske*) *Petrarch Collection* (Cornell University Library), Introd. pp. xvii. xviii.

[2] *F.* III. 15; XIII. 10; XX. 13.

[3] *F.* XVIII. 8 (to F. Nelli), written at Milan in 1355.

[4] *Sen.* XIII. 11 (to Philip, Cardinal of Sabina), June 26, 1372.

[5] *Ep. Post.* (Frac. I. 2).

[6] *F.* XVIII. 10 (to F. Nelli), early in 1355. This is taken from A. Gellius (*Noct. Att.*), XIII. 11.

visit of friends as studious as himself, they would sit up together talking at night till the appearance of dawn. He speaks of " the sweetness and delight " that he took " from their voices and from the lightning flashes of their eyes, in which, as through double windows, you can behold the soul of the friend dwelling within." [1]

Yet, as a rule, he was a lonely man ; and his insatiable appetite for new scenes and surroundings was the cause of much separation from those whom he loved best. But he assures them that even then they are seldom out of his thoughts ; by the power of imagination he can, at any time, feel them present, and is wont to invent long dialogues and discussions in which, though absent, they can take their part. This was a favourite habit of the poet, like the " castle-building," to which Macaulay confesses ; his allusions to it are numerous and frequent. One such letter [2] is to the old uncle of his patron—Giovanni di San Vito—who had written to him in rather querulous terms of his inconsolable grief at his separation from the inmates of the Colonna Palace.

" I am sure," replies Petrarch, " that you are moved and troubled by your sudden departure ; for I know your kindness of heart and sweetness of disposition, which is altogether alien from the sterner cast of mind. And yet I can see no reason for this immoderate distress. For among all the countless causes that keep friends apart, there can be none that affect a friendship which is real ; for the more we are divided by distance from intercourse with our friends, the more we make up for the detriment of absence by constantly remembering them."

He reinforces his position by a " catena " of quotations, mainly from Virgil, but he clinches it by an argument of his own.

" I grant," he says—" and who but a savage would not ?—that the presence of our friends is very sweet ; but you must admit, too, that even absence has its pleasures, unless, indeed, we restrict the whole beauty of friendship, which is wide as the world, merely to the eyes, and separate it from its seat, which is the mind. In such a case the love of friends will have but a narrow field for its exercise."

He points out that friends living in the same city—nay, in the same house—are constantly forced to be apart, and that a

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 4 (Frac.) *ut sup.*
[2] *F.* II. 6—probably of 1331 or 1332.

friendship limited to sight would be very brief, whereas it should endure through the longest life, and even survive it.

" Keep in mind," he concludes, " not your distance from us in the body—for such atoms as men are have little to do with space—but that you have the power to be with us in mind and thought. Look at us perpetually in this, the only possible, way, and present yourself to us freely in the frequent interchange of letters."

To a later friend [1] he develops the same theme in more rhetorical fashion ; such declamation, however, was his second nature and throws no suspicion on his sincerity.

" You are ever with me ; I use the lover's privilege, and see and hear you though absent. The Apennines can part our bodies, but no space can divide souls. Put between us the Alps and Caucasus and Atlas and Olympus loftier than the clouds—nay, interpose the very Ocean—yet we will meet, discuss, converse and be together ; we will walk and sup together and sit up all night ; we will conquer troublesome absence by conscious present affection—not by a wind-borne letter, such as Tiberianus [2] feigns to have been sent from the Antipodes to dwellers in this hemisphere."

In one of his last letters,[3] forty years after the first quoted, he returns to the subject, but in graver strain, befitting one who has seen most of his friends pass into the unknown.

" If we loved nothing but what we see with our eyes, no one could love God or his own soul—or even his own face, in the absence of a mirror. So I love best both in my friends and in myself that which I see not. And in the marvellously refreshing intercourse that I have with a friend I perceive not so much his bodily face as its inner beauty—the countenance and lineaments of his soul—and I know that what meets the eye is not my friend himself, but his dwelling-place. For the soul of the man is the man, and not that ' form,' which, in Cicero's elegant phrase, you admiringly touch with your fingers.[4] . . . This is my

[1] *Var.* 22 (to M. Burbato in Naples), from Milan, October 12, 1355.

[2] A late poet of the fourth century (perhaps identical with C. Junius T., Consul in A.D. 281, 291). See Baehrens, *P. L. Min.* III. 264. In *P. et. l'Hum.* there is no reference to P.'s knowledge of this writer.

[3] *Sen.* XVI. 4 (Frac.), to Cardinal Philip, May 5, 1372.

[4] P. illustrates this with a story of the philosopher Anaxarchus (taken from Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*), who, being captured by the Cyprian tyrant Nicocreon and about to be pounded to death in a mortar, remarked to his executioner, " You strike but the bellows of Anaxarchus "—*i.e.* the case from which the philosopher's breath proceeded.

supreme aim that, though we dwell far apart, I may feel your power over me; for my soul is in your keeping, as I trust that yours is in mine. This is the case not merely with those who are absent, but with those who have gone altogether, and whose bodies are turned to dust; they live again with me, as do you in your absence. Thus the loss caused by death and separation is softened by love."

A man with so high an ideal of friendship deserved to have his affection warmly returned; and such seems to have been Petrarch's fortune throughout his long life. In all his frequent changes of residence he was constantly making new friends without dropping any of the old. He chose them from all conditions of life—soldiers, writers, ecclesiastics, diplomatists, men of business, lawyers (both pleaders and notaries)—even nobles and princes, for the poet insists strongly that friendship ought to know nothing of distinctions of rank.[1] Many, no doubt, were first attracted to him by his growing renown; but if they were possessed of intelligence and affection, they found him eager to respond to their advances and became occasional, if not regular, correspondents. Naturally, most of his friends were Italians; yet his position at Avignon made him, with all his fervid patriotism, to some extent cosmopolitan. His most intimate friend was a Dutchman; and he counted eminent Frenchmen, such as Philippe de Vitry, among those to whom he wrote in affectionate terms. He was even willing, like many of his successors in the world of letters, to accept offers of friendship from men to whom he was personally unknown. The forty-five books[2] of his extant correspondence contain letters addressed to 147 living individuals by name; and besides those in the book *Sine Titulo*, there are over thirty addressed to persons whose names he has, for various reasons, seen fit to conceal. Of this large number many no doubt were casual acquaintances, while others were persons of eminence, to whom he wrote for political reasons, without contracting any closer relations with them. Yet there is a residuum of at least fifty, who may be classed as friends more or less intimate. But it must be remembered that he also had many friends, some of whom we know by name,[3]

[1] *Sen.* XVI. 4 (*ut sup.*).

[2] Excluding the letters *Sine Titulo*.

[3] As Mainardo Accursio, to whom he gave the sobriquet of "Simplicianus."

whose scholarship did not admit of his addressing them in Latin. To these he would write familiarly and in Italian; but he has not deemed it consonant with his literary dignity to preserve such communications. No Italian letter of Petrarch has yet been produced which has any claim to be considered genuine.[1] We need not assume, however, that all whom he has addressed in Latin were fully capable of appreciating the honour. As he grew older and more famous, the desire to obtain a niche, however humble, in the published *Epistolarium* of the great poet became widespread, and could easily be gratified by a short letter which some more learned friend would translate.

If we exclude Popes, Cardinals and Princes, whose exalted position rendered real friendship impossible, Petrarch's friends might be divided into "circles," corresponding either with well-marked periods of his own life, or with the places with which certain friends were mainly connected. The first "circle" was that of his childhood and early youth to 1330, in which his brother Gherardo, Gui Sette, and Tommaso Caloria of Messina are the principal names. Of these we have already spoken, as of his more aged friends, Giovanni of Florence and Raimondo Soranzo. Some whom he knew in early years did not become his correspondents till much later, as Pons Sanson, who may have been a schoolfellow, and perhaps Matteo Longo [2] and Giovanni dell' Ancisa. Then there was the "circle" of Avignon and Vaucluse (1330–1347), chief among whom were the Bishop of Lombez with "Socrates" and "Lælius." In this circle may be included Philippe de Cabassoles, Bishop of Cavaillon, and Sennuccio Delbene, Petrarch's confidant in his love-affair. Minor "lights" in the same company were his relative Francesco Albizzi, Luca Cristiano (the friend of his University days), and Mainardo Accursio (both of whom were for a time at least attached to the

[1] If we except the letters in Franco's *Petrarchista* (1539), which are patent inventions, there are five Italian letters ascribed to P.—two to Giacomo Colonna, and one each to L. Beccamuggi, Azzo da Correggio and Pandolfo Malatesta. The two first, published with translation by Ugo Foscolo, in his *Essays on P.*, 1823 (pp. 118–120 and 270–275), have been proved to be apocryphal by Meneghelli (Frac. I., *Proleg.* iv. n.), and in the third Fracassetti (*It.* I. pp. 7–8) sees no sign of genuineness. The fourth and fifth I have not seen, but they are confidently pronounced to be apocryphal.

[2] De Sade says (I. p. 54) that Longo was at Bologna with P., but I can find no authority for the statement.

Cardinal's household), together with G. A. Romanello. We may include in a Roman circle the two Stefano Colonnas (father and son) with the brother of the former, Giovanni di San Vito, Paolo Annibaldi, and their political opponent, Cola di Rienzo. Next there was a " Neapolitan circle," consisting of friends made during his visits of 1341 and 1343. Chief among these were the notary Marco Barbato of Sulmona with the courtiers Giovanni di Barili and Niccolo d'Alife. We may count as members of this circle the Grand Seneschal Niccolo Acciaiuoli (though the acquaintance with him began later) and the friar Dionisio Roberti, who spent the last four years of his life in a Calabrian bishopric. There was also a " Florentine circle," consisting mainly of friends whom he first made by correspondence, as Enea Tolomei, Giovanni Aretino, Zanobi da Strada, Lapo da Castiglionchio, Forese Donati, Bruno da Casino, and last—but far the most intimate—Francesco Nelli di Rinucci and Giovanni Boccaccio. A sixth " circle " was that of Northern Italy (Parma and Verona), which belongs chiefly to the years of the poet's middle life (1341–1353). The most important of his friends there were Azzo da Correggio, Guglielmo da Pastrengo and the Milanese Governor of Parma, Puganino Bizozero. Others were Gabriele Zamorra, Ghiberto, Giovanni and Moggio da Parma, Andrea da Mantova and Rinaldo da Villafranca. There was also doubtless a " Milanese circle," of which we know but few names, but it included Pandolfo Malatesta, Giovanni Mandello and Sagramor de Pommiers. Among the friends of Petrarch's old age—some of whom were recent acquaintances but others of long standing—we may include Stefano Colonna of St. Omer, Francesco Bruni, Benintendi of Ravignano, Donato Albanzani, Giovanni Dondi, Donnino of Piacenza, Neri Morando and Lombardo da Serico. In these divisions, of course, are embraced friendships of almost every degree of intimacy. If we count only " friends of a lifetime," Petrarch had more than most men—at least ten—comprising the Bishop of Lombez and his two companions there, Gui Sette, Tommaso of Messina, Guglielmo da Pastrengo, the Bishop of Cavaillon, Marco Barbato, and the two friends of later life, Nelli and Boccaccio. He seems never to have been afraid of diminishing old friendships by contracting a new one. Indeed, he advises an unnamed acquaintance [1] to make as many *good* friends as possible, premising that

[1] *F.* III. 15 (Frac. I. 173).

he need never fear having too many of these; for in Juvenal's words [1] the good will scarcely equal the number of the gates of Thebes or of the mouths of the Nile.

Complaint has been made [2] that Petrarch's friends, especially "Socrates" and "Lælius," are shadowy personages, bereft of substance and character, whom we have to take at his valuation. To some extent this is true; it is a necessary consequence of the fact that we have only his letters to them, and not their replies to him. In all correspondence the writer speaks most of himself for the sake of those to whom he writes; he cannot on this score be fairly accused of egotism. But when it is said [3] that he was never too engrossed with his own affairs to give a large share of his life to those of others, we can only reply that it may be so, but that he has suppressed the evidence through eliminating private matters from his published correspondence. His letters to his dearest friends abound in expressions of affection; and their tone, though generally firm and virile, is sometimes tender as that of a lover towards his lady.[4] We find here something of the demonstrativeness of southerners, which is less in fashion among northern races.

Petrarch's friends, however, were so far from being mere "lay-figures" that there are few of his intimates of whom we could not draw a sketch—faithful indeed, though less life-like than that actually drawn by Landor [5] (of course from more ample material) of Boccaccio, the most famous of them all. The Fleming Ludwig ("Socrates") we should picture as a placid man of sound common sense and unruffled good temper—a little phlegmatic, perhaps, but with none of those "angles" which sometimes cause a strain upon the closest friendship. The Roman Lello ("Lælius") has been described,[6] on the strength of a single letter,[7] as "sombre and melancholy," but this was probably but a passing mood. He was courteous and warm-hearted—sound at the core, but apt to brood, and sometimes subject to the

[1] *Sat.* XIII. 27. In each case the number seems to have been seven.
[2] Koerting, p. 16.
[3] Mézières, p. 192.
[4] Cf. *F.* XXII. 4 (to Barbato), "Tu me tuis affectibus, ego te complector meis."
[5] In his *Pentameron*, a five-days' "Imaginary Conversation" between P. and B.
[6] By H. Cochin in his *Lettres de Nelli* (Introd. p. 79). Yet in Letter XXV. Nelli himself calls Lælius "suavissimus hominum."
[7] *F.* XX. 12.

feminine passion of jealousy. Tommaso of Messina Petrarch probably never saw after his student days, but they maintained a regular correspondence. The friendship between them was originally of the intellectual type, though its roots struck deep. Tommaso was a youth of the highest promise—ambitious and conscious of power, but extremely amiable and quite incapable of envying the precocious fame of his early friend. All this we gather from the tone and the subjects of Petrarch's letters to him.[1] The two friends were agreed that the mediæval system of education was hopelessly rotten, and did not even produce the fruits which were its special boast. They were joint knight-errants for reform, and hoped to effect it by example as well as by precept. With Francesco Nelli, on the other hand, our poet formed no acquaintance till his fame was world-wide and secure; and even then they met but seldom.[2] Yet their correspondence is almost voluminous; and we are so fortunate as to possess the humbler man's replies. The modest and pious priest had long worshipped Petrarch from a distance, and having succeeded in pleasing him at the first interview, was content to be the echo of his friend's opinions. Incessantly occupied with petty business, he had not much leisure for literature, though by nature devoted to it; but he had a gentle and tender soul, which made him an ideal friend. His tact and enthusiasm had no small share in spreading the poet's renown.

After the year 1350 there was a literary coterie of "Petrarchists" at Florence—a sort of self-constituted Academy—which used to hold regular meetings after a banquet for discussion and comment upon the works of "the Master." Like the Browning Society of our day, it considered itself competent to give authoritative interpretations of the poet's meaning which he himself might, or might not, approve. The arrival of a letter from him addressed to some fortunate member of the circle was a veritable "event," which caused its members to meet in haste. The missive, which was enclosed in a box, was eagerly produced and read aloud to the assembly amid expressions of warm admiration. The scene, which is described for us by Nelli,[3] may

[1] I give three specimens at the end of this chapter.

[2] Cochin (*op. cit.* p. 53) says only twice, for a few days each time.

[3] Cochin (Introd. pp. 46 and 80–82) and Letters II. and XIV. of Nelli. P. himself makes no allusion to this coterie of admirers, but he must have been well aware of it.

give us some idea of the incense offered to the poet even during his life.

It would be idle to deny that this excessive idolatry injured Petrarch's character as a man. To the last he remained avid of praise and impatient of censure or contradiction. What has not always been perceived is that these were but " the defects of his qualities " and never, so far as we can see, affected his relations with his friends. When once he had taken a man to his heart, that man acquired a prescriptive right to praise or censure him at his will, so long as he continued to return his affection. The poet was never offended by any well-meant counsel or remonstrance from his friends, though he was not necessarily disposed to follow it. He goes so far as to say [1] that such friendly admonitions were soothing and pleasant to him. But the carping criticism of a stranger was another matter ; it aroused all that combative vanity which his friends' love had disarmed, and led him to vie with his stoutest assailants in the art of slinging mud.[2] This kind of sensitiveness is a common literary failing, which has led to many breaches of friendship ; but with Petrarch it was reserved only for strangers and for the illiterate crowd. With his friends he had a kingly way of taking the lead, as he used to do in his boyish days around Bologna ; and he regarded their praise as the outcome of their love, and therefore simply as his due. In one of his latest letters [3] he maintains that well-deserved praise is an incentive to moral perfection and to perseverance. " We use a stick," he says, " for an ass, but praise for a high-mettled steed ; so a sensible mind is not inflated by praise, but raised to greater heights " ; and then he complacently adds, " I speak from some experience." In the same letter he bids his correspondent reject the voice of flatterers, as he would poison mixed with honey, and by severity of word and look forbid their approach. As to the praise of others, if it be deserved, he must be humbly mindful of human frailty and glorify only the Giver of all good things ; but if not, he must mark his own shortcomings so as to correct his praiser, and at the same time strive to be really such as he is represented to be. These reflections are perhaps

[1] *F.* XVIII. 6 (to Forese Donati).

[2] Notably in his *Invective against Physicians* and *Apologia contra Gallum.*

[3] *Sen.* XVI. 9 (to the Prior of the Grande Chartreuse).

obvious, as the platitudes of a well-meant sermon ; nevertheless Petrarch scarcely succeeded in carrying them into practice. He regarded the praise of his friends as sincere, simply because they were his friends ; it seldom occurred to him that that fact might be held to bias their judgment. Almost the only letters from friends extant are those of his warm admirers Pastrengo and Nelli ; if all the rest were in the same strain, our poet must have lived in an atmosphere of unhealthy adulation.

An amusing incident during one of his sojourns at Vaucluse indicates that this literary idolatry had its inconvenient side. Petrarch was entertaining a party of friends at his rustic abode ; and before they left, he missed a letter from his desk, which he had addressed to his old schoolfellow Gui Sette. All admitted that it had been read aloud when he was out of the room, but in the hurry of departure nothing more was said. On his attempting to reclaim it from them, it had disappeared ; and his subsequent vexation throws light both upon his own character and upon the object with which many of his letters were written.

" I have lost a letter which I had addressed to you. The loss was caused by the long wait for some one to convey it and by the too pressing attentions of some of my companions, who, while roaming through my study with a keen eye to novelties and, as Solinus says, more restless than studious, fell upon it, read it and took it without my knowledge. They declare they were afraid that a copy of it might be lost, as had happened more than once before to the indignation of my friends, who had reproached me for my carelessness. On hearing of the affair, I urged them to restore it, but they were in too great a hurry. The result proves the truth of some poet's remark that ' haste is a bad manager.' For while all wish they had it, none of them has it ; and the one who, as all agree, took it to copy out has either, to his dismay, lost it or pretends that he has done so—anyhow all I know is that it has not turned up. I could never have believed—though I have to confess it without a blush—that so small a matter would have caused me such extreme annoyance. Scarcely ever have I seen such evident tokens of my own weakness. I was on the rack, and for many days and nights hunted for it and bewailed its loss, blaming now the rash assurance of my companions, now my own levity—at one moment reproaching them for their excessive and importunate admiration of my style, at another chiding myself, because in my eagerness for untimely glory from the fruits of my studies, I had perhaps been too hasty with my friends. Time, however, relieves every mental injury.

I am now no longer distressed, but ashamed that my distress has been so great, and since nothing remains of the letter but a loving remembrance of it, I can say, with Augustine, that it has gone, but the pen remains. Meanwhile, in reverting to my usual habit of writing, I wanted to prevent you being surprised at my unwonted silence by letting you know the cause." [1]

Having heard from Gui in reply that he regretted the tricks of fortune, but had learnt to arm himself against them, Petrarch resumes the subject in another letter.[2] After reflecting on the windy sort of glory that comes from mere words, he confesses that he was indignant with himself for his own vexation. But when he remembered how pleasant it had been to read over the letter, he was inclined to acquit himself of blame. He believed God had inspired him to say something that was not only pleasant, but profitable. The reproofs that he had uttered against his own softness, together with his alternate exhortations and indignation against the vices of the age, seemed to him, as he read them, to be beyond his natural powers, so that he had thought more highly of this letter than he was wont to think of his other writings. Just as painters and sculptors produce superb masterpieces of art, though themselves ugly or of homely appearance, so he might have written a beautiful letter, though himself base and sinful. And perhaps he had been suffered to lose it that he might learn that excellence of form in writings is sometimes harmful. He has now sufficiently celebrated his letter's obsequies from grief at its early death—premature and, so to speak, in its cradle. The reason why he was so inconsolable for its loss was that he had no hope of raising another from its bones—a phœnix, as it were, from its ashes.

"Not a relic of it has survived; for contrary to my usual custom, I had committed the whole to paper, and nothing to memory. And so, though I rack my brain, I cannot find a vestige of it. This only I retain, that it was sweet to me as I wrote it, sweeter while I was reading it, and most bitter in the remembrance of it. It was just as if a comb of sweet honey brought to the lips were suddenly withdrawn, and only a bitter memory of its sweetness left. Upset by this, I ceased writing for a long time;

[1] This letter is *F.* V. 16. Its date is uncertain, but may perhaps be about 1345.

[2] *F.* V. 17.

for I grew to hate my late vigils and measured the chances of the rest by this one mishap. At length, however, blaming my own folly in leaving the sea for fear of shipwreck, or like a farmer, in laying up the plough after one bad year, I returned to my pen."

I shall have occasion in a later chapter [1] to pass Petrarch's correspondence in review, and to suggest a place for him among the crowd of letter-writers, ancient and modern. Here I propose only to consider that correspondence in connexion with his friends by explaining exactly what it was and the difficulties besetting it. First, it should be understood that the title, *De Rebus Familiaribus*, which he gave to his first collection, is largely a misnomer. Even if it be taken in its widest sense to mean "On Matters connected with his friends," [2] only a small proportion of the letters really answer to the description. They are studied compositions, of which he was careful to make a copy as a rule before dispatch with a view to subsequent publication. Some of his letters are veritable treatises, and exhibit scarcely a trace of the familiar style. In early and middle life they are generally long; but in old age he became weary of the burden,[3] and many of the *Senile Letters*—though there are notable exceptions—are quite brief.

Cicero divides [4] the best species of letters into three classes, those containing news, those written in a light and easy style, and those on serious and moral topics. The letters of Petrarch, who had never seen this classification, and who takes Seneca rather than Cicero for his model, fall mainly under the last head. But fortunately he has not confined his choice to such letters, as Seneca has almost done; and therefore we find in his collections that variety of interests—centring, however, chiefly on himself—which belongs to the best correspondence. Although they often contain news, both public and private, and although the style is frequently affected and rhetorical, there is always "mind" in his letters, and very often deep feeling too—

[1] See Chap. XXX. (Book VI.) on the publication of the letters.

[2] P. tells "Socrates" in his *Preface to F.* (Frac. I. 23) that the letters were written with little regard to style, simply in a homely way to convey news to his friends, and that that is why he has given them their title. The statement is surprising, and inconsistent with his other assertion that he has left out private matters.

[3] *Sen.* XVI. 3 (Frac.), to F. da Siena, written May, 1374, within three months of his death.

[4] *Ad Fam.* III. 12.

never mere banal and trivial gossip. These were the means which he chose—perhaps the only means at his disposal—for impressing his personality as a literary man upon a wider public. From their very nature as such they could not display the ease and pleasantry of the best modern letters—of those, for instance, of Madame de Sevigné or Cowper, or Lamb or R. L. Stevenson; but they are not without traces of a subconscious—sometimes, perhaps, of an unconscious—humour which gives them a curiously modern flavour. It has been well said [1] that, in the awakening intellectual life of Petrarch's day, these letters took the place of the literary articles in our journals and reviews, and that the renown of Petrarch among his contemporaries was not merely that of a graceful poet, but that of a learned publicist, who took no special department, but the whole of human nature for his theme.

But the hard conditions of mediæval life made this rôle a very difficult one to play. Petrarch could not, like ourselves, write to any one in any quarter of the world whenever he pleased. His compositions often had to lie long upon his hands before he could find a messenger; sometimes they were never sent at all, or only after a long interval, perhaps of years, and a few were returned to him with the seal unbroken, because his correspondent was dead.[2] One result of the scarcity of messengers was that letters were often entrusted to a passing traveller, who might be careless or untrustworthy, and if he had to return at once, could not wait for a long or polished reply. It was necessary to write letters in advance, and trust to chance for their dispatch. Even when this difficulty was overcome, there was a further obstacle in the unsafeness of the roads, especially in time of war. Though he might carry his letters in a secret pocket, which Nelli calls his "treasure," [3] his plunderers might be well aware of the fact, and might desire them more than anything else he carried, either for the sake of news, or because a letter from a famous man would have a market value.[4] Even Nelli's letters were sometimes stolen, and he more than once states in the opening sentences in order to disarm the thief, that the letter was ill-composed and had no literary merit. Petrarch, from his world-wide fame, was a much more frequent victim. He tells us

[1] H. Cochin (*op. cit.*), p. 47.
[2] As with his last letters to Lello and Nelli. Cf. *Sen.* III. 4.
[3] Letter XI. of Nelli (Cochin, p. 195).
[4] Cochin, p. 52.

himself that some of his letters to Nelli were intercepted, and that the cause was merely the troublesome admiration felt by certain individuals for his style, which did them no good but harm, like the water purloined by patients suffering from fever.[1] He complains to Lælius in 1363 [2] that apocryphal letters were in circulation bearing his name, and to Boccaccio ten years later [3] that his genuine letters were abstracted by inquisitive persons, who failed to restore them if they found anything to offend their "asinine ears." Another hindrance to natural correspondence of the modern type was the length of time needed for the transmission of letters from France to Italy, or the reverse way. Unless they were sent by some official courier, the journey would take three weeks at least,[4] and sometimes longer; and if events moved fast, the original letter had become "ancient history" before a reply could be received.

These natural obstacles profoundly affected the frank interchange of thought and feeling between separated friends in the fourteenth century. The letter—especially if destined for future publication—tended to become an essay, the interest of which would be independent of the lapse of time. The novelty of Petrarch's epistolary efforts consisted in the personal charm which he contrived to throw over an artificial production composed in a dead language. This was due in part to that preoccupation with his own personality which, though it doubtless helped to feed his vanity, was a new phenomenon in his day. He has managed to communicate to his own feelings and adventures something of the glamour with which the genius of Addison invested the members of the Spectator Club. That is, he has succeeded in making himself interesting and even lovable to us, as to those friends who felt the magic of his influence—and this even in spite of the waywardness and other failings which are only too evident in his character and conduct. He is oversolicitous about style and expression even in the most intimate

[1] *F.* XVIII. 7 (to Nelli). He makes a similar complaint in *Var.* 4 (to Moggio da Parma, Frac. III. 314, 315). F. S. Kraus, *F. P. and his Epistolary Correspondence* (Ital. trans. by D. Valbusa, p. 6), also refers to App. 8 (which is really *S. T.* 2, Frac. III. 532). But the stolen letters in that case were those of Rienzi, which were intercepted as a personal insult and from a political motive.

[2] *Sen.* II. 4.

[3] *Sen.* XVII. 3 (Frac. (*It.*) II. 563).

[4] So Kraus estimates (*op. cit.* p. 6).

of his letters; too often he stalks upon stilts, when an ambling gait would be far more effective. But this defect is partly owing to his employment of Latin; and we are disposed to agree with Kraus [1] that if he had written in Italian, his reputation as a letter-writer would stand far higher. In his best letters, however, the affectation is much more in the form than in the thought. In a dead language, as Mézières well remarks,[2] the simplest expression is often hard to find; and the writer who uses Latin without complete mastery of it is apt to become pretentious from mere embarrassment. "The reason is that the exact Latin term has escaped him, and he has put in its place some awkward periphrasis." Such is the penalty which Petrarch has to pay for employing an unfamiliar medium. Moreover, in addressing his friends, he is much too conscious of the great public standing behind them, which will one day be admitted to share his confidences. Doubtless the best modern letters are those written without any such *arrière pensée;* but some, as those of Horace Walpole, are still much admired in spite of it. Yet if Walpole had possessed scholarship enough to write in Latin, his admirers would have been far fewer—not merely because scholars themselves are few, but because his straining after effect, already too evident, would then have been far more perceptible. Symonds attributes to Petrarch, not without justice, "the vice of a stylistic ideal." [3] Yet, if we compare his Latin letters with those of his precursors, like John of Salisbury, or with those of some of his humanist successors, as Politian, we shall marvel at the large humanity which so often manages to triumph over the defects of form.

The chief complaint that has been made [4] against his letters is that they are "written soliloquies" rather than letters properly so called—that, in fact, they display little or no affectionate interest in the persons addressed and no skilful adaptation to their feelings and prejudices. Consequently, though addressed (as stated above) to people of widely different callings and positions in life, they are described as being "all in the same tone" and as breathing the spirit of literary egotism. "The hero is always

[1] *Op. cit.* pp. 13, 14.
[2] *Pétrarque*, Chap. IV. Sect. III. p. 179.
[3] In *The Revival of Learning* (1892), p. 84.
[4] Koerting (*op. cit.*), pp. 16, 17.

upon the stage; the chorus never steps out of the twilight of the background." Petrarch, it is said, always affects a dignified reserve; "it would injure his vanity to come down from the heights of Parnassus to the level of common humanity." There is a modicum of truth in this criticism, in spite of the extravagance of its terms. But it by no means applies to all the letters, as some specimens to be given presently will prove; and so far as it is true, the effect is due, at least in part, to the severe editing to which he subjected them before publication and to the fact that, even originally, they were written as "essays," with the view of pleasing a wider public. If Petrarch ever attempted—which we may well doubt—to suppress all trace of his own feelings and of his interest in his correspondents, he has certainly not succeeded; witness the heart-felt confession to his friend the Bishop that, in loving, he needed rather the bridle than the spur.[1] We are here confronted with the psychological puzzle which we noted earlier in this chapter. Had he been the strong, self-centred being that Dr. Koerting depicts, he could not have attracted and enjoyed for years the warm affection of so many devoted friends. The truth is that the subjectivity, which to us gives his letters their chief charm, was to them even more charming because of its rarity. If his vanity was fed by their admiration, they knew that this failing would never affect the warmth of his friendship.

But, in his middle life, Petrarch devoted a whole letter[2] to the contention that, in corresponding with his friends, he tried to write from the heart without any studied art or ornament.

"I shun superfluous toil; it will be enough if I am equal to the occasion, for great love needs none of the artifices of eloquence. Who is there that does not think his sweetheart speaks finely, or that the prattling of his babe is delicious? Or who strives after ornament when he is talking to himself? And one's friend, as the proverb says, should be one's other self; Cicero says that nothing can be sweeter than to have one with whom one can dare to talk as to oneself. If you require of your friend more than you require of yourself, you are not meeting him on equal terms."

He then spends some pages in proving by argument and illustration that, if a man has an eloquent friend, he owes it

[1] See above, p. 332.

[2] *F.* XVIII. 8 (to Francesco Nelli).

not to the friendship, but to mere good luck. He is like the vine-dresser who used to come up to Petrarch in Rome and show him ancient jewels or gold and silver coins dug up there with the request that he would either buy them, or at least identify the Emperor's effigy. We congratulate such a man on his good luck, but we do not praise him. Two men may have each formed a friendship with equal care, may have loved sincerely and utterly trusted the man of their choice; yet to one the friendship may bring only trouble and danger, to the other riches and honour. But these are mere accidents; with a friend a man should have no object but his friendship.

"And so, in my familiar letters, eloquence should not be demanded of me, since I do not require it of others; and I should not be blamed for talking to my friends as I do to myself; In me this has produced carelessness both of matter and language. . . . But in my friendships I have no art or ulterior aim except to love warmly, trust utterly, make no pretence or concealment, and present to my friends the exact state of my own mind."

Here, no doubt, we have Petrarch's ideal after serious reflection, and an excellent ideal, too; but few would venture to say that he has often attained it. He was deficient in the supreme "art of concealing his art"; he shows it by his remarks at the close of this very letter, where he admits that he has written it to develop the opinions expressed in another sent with it—"not in order to captivate his friend by empty artifice, but that the sentiment might be more elegant and sonorous." Petrarch was in the habit of treating more private and domestic matters in a separate enclosure, possibly written in Italian [1]; the above is the only instance of his adopting this device with the view of supplementing his first rough draft by a more polished production. The letter was evidently written with a larger audience at the back of his mind; and it is highly characteristic, not only that he should employ art in the very missive written to prove that such art is misplaced, but also that he should openly proclaim the fact before he has done!

[1] So Koerting conjectures (p. 14). It is curious that in the letter sent with this, and written before it, he promises such a private enclosure; but both letters may have been composed some time before they were dispatched. Other instances of the same practice are mentioned in *F.* XX. 2; *Sen.* XIII. 12 and *Sen.* XIV. 6.

Petrarch could not have been a grossly selfish man; for there is plenty of evidence that his friends looked up to him for counsel and comfort, and that he considered their interests sometimes at the expense of his own.[1] But the following circumstance may lead us to infer that he was difficult to live with—not from any fault of temper, but from his capricious and irregular habits. It was the dream of his life to live in studious seclusion with one or more chosen friends under his roof. He made such a proposal five times at least to five different friends[2]; but the project was never realized, though once mentioned in a petition to the Pope.[3] There may, of course, have been external difficulties which could not be overcome; but it is natural to suspect that those who knew him best were aware that such an arrangement could not be lasting. It was not that he was fickle in his attachments, or hard to please; but from his congenital restlessness there was no telling how long he would be content with a plan at first eagerly embraced, or with a place even if chosen by himself. Not merely entire concord of will, but a sacrifice of some ingrained habits and a complete similarity of tastes and employments would have been needed to make such a union successful.

We shall see later that Petrarch's political opinions were those of a student, largely ignorant of the busy world around him and of the motives and prejudices which sway masses of men. But in dealing with individuals whom he knew and loved, he displays a surprising amount of tact and knowledge of character. It has been well remarked[4] that he has "an exquisite art of saying things—that art which comes from the heart and which enables him to find without effort the most delicate mode of

[1] As when he renounced his newly conferred canonry in 1352 in favour of Luca Cristiano (*F.* XIV. 4); and in the same letter he says that he had divided the revenues of his two first canonries (Lombez and Pisa) with two of his oldest friends. I fail to understand how these arrangements could have been made, unless he held the benefices himself, and forwarded their revenues to his friends. The refusal or resignation of a benefice does not carry the power of conferring it.

[2] To Socrates (twice) in 1347 and 1350; to Barbato in 1347; to Luca Cristiano and Mainardo Accursio in 1349; and to Moggio da Parma in 1355.

[3] This petition to Clement VI., dated September 9, 1347, was first published by Carlo Cipolla (*Note Petrarchesche desunte dall' Archivio Vaticano* in *Memorie della Reale Accademia di Torino*, Ser. II. t. LVIII. 1909. See below, Chap. XIX.

[4] Mézières, p. 182.

expression." If he confers a favour, it is in such terms that he might rather seem to be receiving one. If he has occasion to find fault, he does it with so light a hand that his friend could not take offence, but rather finds fresh proof of his affection under the guise of reproach. As I have said, his life supplies no instance of a quarrel with a friend—unless it were with his kind patron and protector the Cardinal; and in that case the separation was the result of political differences and scarcely amounted to a definite rupture of relations. But Petrarch had a heart so tender that any disturbance of friendly relations among his own friends gave him infinite concern. Twice at least he had to play the thankless part of peacemaker in such a quarrel; and his success in both cases was due to a combination of warmth of affection with extreme delicacy of treatment.

Hearing one day in the spring of 1352 that two of his friends, Giovanni Barili and Niccolo Acciaiuoli—both highly placed in the court of Naples—were not on speaking terms and had forsaken their old friendship, Petrarch conceived the idea of addressing them jointly in a letter,[1] which they would be compelled to read together, and exhorting them to make up the quarrel. His effort is a masterpiece of tact; not a word escapes him by which either could suppose that he is held to be more to blame than the other. He bids them remember all the circumstances of their former intimacy, all the many considerations which may urge them to be at peace. Friendship, if it is to be eternal, requires a memory for benefits, and not for offences; if these two are determined to weigh the one against the other, he, as their mentor, is not afraid of the result, but he insists that the computation shall be a fair one.

"The root of all friendship is compatibility of character; but intimacy between bad men is unstable and of short duration, while there is a vast and eternal kinship between the good. What signifies a moment of vexation, even of anger? Where characters are in harmony, virtue clings close, as it unites your hearts with fetters unbreakable as prison-bars; it tempts you with hooks most sweetly baited. . . . It is vain to struggle; you are compelled to love each other; your natural dispositions constrain you to be friends."

[1] *F.* XIII. 10 (to N. A. and G. B. Frac. II. 255–261) written at Vaucluse, May 24, 1352; in the Colbertin MS. at Paris, this letter is numbered *F.* XII. 16.

Not satisfied with this exhortation, he wrote on the same day to each of them separately,[1] urging them to make up the quarrel and relieve his own distress. From a later letter[2] we learn that the two courtiers yielded to his entreaties and became wholly reconciled.

It was a far greater blow when he learnt five years afterwards at Milan, in July, 1357, that Socrates and Lælius, the two earliest and dearest friends of his manhood, who were then both living at Avignon, had drifted apart. Petrarch's concern was redoubled on finding that he was himself the unwitting cause. Some nameless slanderer had whispered in the ear of Lælius that Socrates had been writing of him to Petrarch in slighting terms. The poet at once wrote to the former the following letter,[3] which is one of the best in his collections—for it throws all art and ornament to the winds in his desire to mollify and persuade. In spite of its length I give it entire; though it belongs to a later period, it is a sufficient answer to those who hold that Petrarch's vanity and his increasing renown had narrowed his heart towards his early friends.

"When I knew from your letter your state of mind, and was ignorant of the cause, I advised you[4] to preserve your wonted calm and to despise these worldly matters, so soon to vanish and pass away. Since then, however, the reason of your disquietude has come to my knowledge and has wounded me keenly—I mean, that under the influence of some nameless, but certainly slanderous, tongue you have become enraged with Socrates—your friend and mine, yours indeed before he was mine; and I now find that your wish has been to conceal this from me, who would grieve deeply, as you well knew, at so abominable a business—chiefly because you would rather I learnt if from some one else. O, what shall I say? How shall I begin? Since I am hardly able to think or speak from sheer grief, so completely am I prostrated in heart and utterance by my distress! I could almost wish that he who has been the cause of your disagreement might never be less miserable! Am I then, brother, of so small, so negligible account with you, that in so great a change of mind, in parting with so faithful, so ancient, so well-tried a friend, I should not either be consulted by letter, or if this be more than

[1] *F.* XII. 14 and XIII. 9—both of May 24, 1352.
[2] *F.* XII. 15 (to Zanobi da Strada), August 10, 1352.
[3] *F.* XX. 13 (to Lælius), July 29, 1357.
[4] In *F.* XX. 12, of May 1, 1357. The poison had evidently been at work in Lælius' mind for several months,

I can claim, at least be informed about it after the fact, especially as it seems I am the occasion of the whole mischief? For I hear that that serpent's tongue, which imbued you with this unworthy poison, made no charge against Socrates, except that he had written to me about you in adverse terms. This, indeed, should have been recognized by that wisdom of yours (which belonged to you from youth, and ought to be increased with time) as in every way false and inconceivable, if you had chosen to stop and think.

"Would that you had remembered that story of Plato! For he spurned and drove away one who accused his friend Xenocrates of having traduced him—just as Socrates was accused to you—saying that it was impossible a friend so dear and so beloved should fail to make return for his love. How could you, in regard to a friend, put so easy a faith in one who is, I should say, the enemy of you both, as he certainly is of truth? Alas for a credulity so prone and hasty, which has been the ruin of a thousand friendships! I would I had as much time as I have the mind to write; I should then say much which I must pass over.

"In brief, suspicion is the poison of friendship; it cannot dwell in a lofty and noble heart, and I marvel that it should have crept into yours. Your Socrates, they say, has spoken ill of you. With what object, I pray? What had you done to him, or what would he gain by making me hate you—which would have been beyond his power or any man's? Such madness was not credible in one so prudent. For though he was born beyond the bounds of Italy, no man lives who is more thoroughly Italian in mind and heart—a result which is due to us two beyond all others. And, O shame! this insolent slanderer has dared to add that it is to me Socrates has spoken ill of Lælius!

"Consider now what force a charge possesses that is brought by a fool and a scoundrel against one most sensible and excellent. If you resolutely expel every cloud of anger from your feelings; if you call up before you the whole life that we have led to this moment not only in concord, but united, I may say, in very soul—you will perceive in that one word three lies without a shadow of truth. Remember all this, and truth will take the part of innocence; your own conscience will play the advocate without a word from me; and a friend who is accused before his friend will not need the defence of another friend who is absent. Believe me, Lælius—nay, rather, believe yourself, for you know the hearts of all our circle as if they were your own (and perhaps better, for we know other people more profoundly and impartially than ourselves)—believe yourself and no other; believe truth that pleads with your heart and not the treachery of talebearers that clamour in your ear; and so I hope you do believe already

that neither has Socrates written ill of any one, and, if of all the world, never of you, and if of you, to others, never to me. Do you know why? He knows that I should not believe him, and should be far more angry with him than with you. This is the simple truth. You are the two whose word I would believe in everything but this—I mean an accusation of one by the other, especially if it concerned a fault committed against me, my fortune or my good repute. And he who knows all my affairs absolutely could not be ignorant of this resolve of mine. How then could a prudent man be so blind, however bitterly he hated you—and I dare assert that neither you nor any one else ever had the smallest suspicion of such hatred—as to bring to the bar as a dangerous criminal one of the highest character, for whom truth would plead, whom the judge would acquit without hearing proofs or witnesses, when all the while he would get nothing by it but the name and the odium of an accuser?

"Of course, my dear Lælius, such things can be *said*. There exists no bridle for the human mouth, though no animal needs it so much. Everything can be *said*, but everything should not be believed—I speak feelingly—nor even be listened to. True friends, among whom the name of Lælius is conspicuous, keep deaf ears for talebearers, and spurn everything that is inconsistent with friendship. Nor is it enough to spurn falsehoods. On this one subject it is dishonourable to distinguish between the true and the false. Whatever is said against the good faith of a friend must of necessity go without belief. When once you have made up your mind about a friend, you must never hesitate about his friendship; otherwise the foundation of friendship, which is confidence, will always be giving way. And so the advice of Bias, which Valerius praises, that we should love with a consciousness that our love may one day turn to hate,[1] may perhaps apply to the lawless love of women, never to friendship. For that, in the opinion of the best judges, is defined to be impossible except between the good; so all mean artifices, all low disgraceful cunning, must be excluded from it. Henceforth there must be no distrust, no timidity. For when hearts are joined by the cement of friendship, the two are justly said to be one; and a man ought to have the same hopes and feelings for his friend as for himself. Alike by reason and by Scipio's example, does Lælius in Cicero prove this point; and as you have succeeded to his name, his character and a friendship like his, you ought to be of the same opinion—viz. that love between friends is of such a nature that hatred could not enter the mind; you could not hate, even if you wished to do so. Friendship is indeed a noble and divine, yet a simple thing; it needs great

[1] Val. Max. VII. iii. 10. The following story of Alexander is from the same source, III. viii. 14.

deliberation, but that once for all. Before you love, you must make your choice ; when you have chosen, you must love ; after love, choice comes too late. According to the old proverb, 'what is done is done.' Henceforth there is no room for suspicions, least of all for hate ; nothing remains but to love. How indeed can you love to-day him whom you may hate to-morrow ?

" Rightly then do we applaud that answer of Plato which I mentioned before—aye, and that act of Alexander of Macedon which I often relate, because I so warmly approve it. For he, though rash and hasty in general, was in this matter wonderfully constant. When in his illness he was about to receive a mixed draught from a physician who was his friend, he meanwhile received a letter from no stranger, but from another great friend, warning him that this physician had taken a large bribe from his enemies to compass his death by poison. When he had read the letter, he concealed the matter till the accused entered his chamber to perform his duties. Then the king, rising and holding the letter in his left hand, at once took the cup in his right and drank it without shrinking, afterwards handing the letter to the amazed and innocent physician for him to read. And surely for this one act he deserved to be safe, both then and ever, from plots among his attendants.

" In conclusion, I think I have shown that if it is base to listen to a charge against a friend, it is baser still to believe it. The man who even sifts the credit of a talebearer against a friend is already a traitor to his friendship. Ah me ! how hard it is to find any pleasure in life, how easy to lose it when found ! In friendship alone is Socrates ill-starred ; and yet in that above all, from his zeal for it and the sincerity of his character, he deserved to be happy. He has loved you twenty-eight years, as none but yourself knows better than I ; and yet one scoundrel in a single hour could tear you from him, and not merely that, but turn you from a sweet friend and brother into a deadly foe. Pardon me, brother, it ought not to have been possible while I live, be the cause how great soever (instead of none at all) that there should be such a rending asunder of hearts, which I had supposed to be for ever united by love to each other, and by the common bond of remembrance of me.

" And now, brother, what to do I know not ; I call God to witness that, so deeply am I moved by your disquietude, I am more disposed to sigh, aye and to weep, than to speak. And yet I will say just what is in my heart. I could fill the page with solemn oaths ; but since men generally put less faith in such adjurations, you shall trust my bare word if you will, and if I deserve it. Never has Socrates spoken ill of you, but rather much and most frequently what is good. Even now, if I were to search diligently, I could find many letters in his own hand,

in which he declares most plainly that I have no friend in the Curia but yourself; for the others that I have had are either dead or absent, or have resigned office. He calls you the helper, the perpetual forwarder of my affairs, the single individual whose constancy is unaffected by the detriment of time and absence. To this and the like effect I have letters of his both of old and of recent date; let me be his witness. Whether that scoundrel has seen letters in a contrary sense I cannot say; this I know, that they have never reached me.

"Now consider in whom you will put more faith—in a false and villainous accuser or in a faithful and trusty apologist. I do hope, however, my most affectionate Lælius, that with you some credit at least will attach to this sigh of mine, which wafts to you over many lands and across the rugged Alps my deepest feelings and my most anxious solicitude. Hear me out, my friend, you shall, unless I am mistaken in you. Listen to me, I beg, by the faith of our friendship, by our mutual love, which none have surpassed, by everything between us that has ever been, or shall be, faithful, sacred, sweet and loving. If this be too little, I beg you by the memory of him our most glorious patron,[1] who, though for his noble Cæsarean magnanimity he deserved to be hailed as the Cæsar, yet for his love of country was rather the Camillus or the Scipio of our times—I pray by his illustrious and ah! too perishing family—his kinsmen and nephews—who, while God willed it, loved us most sincerely and were most dear to us; above all by the truly heroic soul of our ever-lamented, ever memorable Ascanius,[2] who by his bitter, sudden death cheated the hopes not only of us, but of Rome and Italy, and cut off the reviving blossom of ancient chivalry—by all these, Lælius, I beg, I entreat, I beseech you to take away at once this trouble, which burns, oppresses, tortures me; and if you love me, or ever have done so—on the spot, before this letter has left your hand, to seek or summon Socrates himself, who is astounded at so great a change in you and distressed at his own ill-fortune. This is what I entreat; it is no hard matter. Only meet, and join the hearts and countenances that have been severed. Do not shrink from one another, who used to love so warmly;

[1] This is evidently the Bishop of Lombez, not Cardinal Colonna. Lælius did not enter the latter's service till the Bishop was dead.

[2] Apparently a classical name given by P. *more suo*, to some warlike scion of the Colonna house. Fracassetti (*It.* IV. 310) conjectures, not improbably, that it was Giovanni, son of Stefano the younger, who was killed with his father at the gates of Rome on November 20, 1347. P. probably refers to him in *F.* V. 2 and XV. 1, and highly praises him in *F.* XIX. 4 (to Charles IV.), where he says that Giovanni loved Lælius as a father—an affection doubtless warmly returned. And so, in P.'s language, old Stefano may have been Anchises, his son Æneas, and his grandson Ascanius.

but unless you would have me grow old in tears and grief, or would throw my very bowels to be torn by dogs, return to that old love.

"Now I shall see if you love me, as men say. Whatever else you write, if you have not done what I ask, it will be false that I have long been dear to you. But if I hear that you have met, I shall be sure of an answer to my prayer that trust in me may restore to you the friend of whom another's treachery had deprived you. After that, I shall dread no more the murmurs of whisperers or the embers of dying wrath. The rumour of hatred can do much to keep apart those who never meet; but great indeed is the power of intercourse when once restored. This is the single thing I entreat and urge upon you; grant me but this, I care not for the rest. What you ought to do, what your duty and the memory of so long an affection should bid you say, you will know at once when you see the face of your friend. In his eyes you will read words that neither I nor Cicero could dictate. Farewell.

"*Milan, July* 29 (before dawn)."

An appeal so tender and touching was not lost upon Laelius, as we learn from a letter [1] of Petrarch to him in the succeeding winter. He had scarcely read the poet's exhortation through, before he sought out Socrates and, amid the tears of both and of the bystanders, rushed into his embrace.

"Now," writes Petrarch, "I recognize Lælius as the man I hoped him to be; he will ever detest slanderers, and will often lament the time that he has lost."

To Socrates a day later he writes [2] with even more feeling:

"Nothing could please me more than your reconciliation. It was splendid; thanks be to God and to you both. He inspired your minds, and you resisted not His Spirit. You both vie in praising my style which, though always unpolished, was then from necessity the work of the moment and affected by haste. It was at least so full of love and affection that—God is my witness—I could not restrain my tears as I wrote. . . . And so, as to the result, I praise nothing but the Divinity, Who is the source of all good, and your humanity, which not only took, but avidly seized my good advice. May the Lord bless you both, who have done a thing most worthy of you, and have given me joy such as nothing else could give."

[1] *F.* XX. 14 (February 9, 1358).
[2] *Ibid.* 15 (February 10).

Petrarch has left many moral exhortations, but none in which his feelings were so deeply stirred as in this. He is almost always didactic, and he not seldom assumes the rôle of censor upon the moral delinquencies of his friends. In this connexion something must be said of a portion of his letters, which, so far as I know, his biographers have entirely passed over—I mean the letters in the four principal collections,[1] in which he has suppressed the name of his correspondent. There are over forty such letters; but in about ten of these it is possible, either by the help of manuscripts or by plausible conjecture, to recognize the person addressed. What was the motive for the suppression? In the earlier letters at least—the first six books of his chief collection—it often seems to have been the same as that which prompts the suppression of names in modern biographies—the fear of giving pain to those addressed or to their relatives. In the letters in which Petrarch declaims against drunkenness,[2] or luxury,[3] or debauchery,[4] or adultery,[5] or avarice,[6] or when he excuses himself for complying with a begging request,[7] or when he argues with a friend against yielding to scepticism,[8] the reason for the suppression is patent. In three letters[9] he satirizes some friend's acquaintance, who might have been recognized had his friend's name been given;

[1] That is, the *De Rebus Familiaribus, Seniles, Variæ* and *Metricæ*. I am not referring to the *Epistolæ Sine Titulo* in which he has withheld the names for obvious reasons.

[2] *F.* III. 9 (entirely general with no remonstrance). P. says the first glass allays thirst, the second produces hilarity, the third enjoyment, the fourth intoxication, the fifth anger, the sixth quarrels, the seventh rage, the eighth sleep, the ninth disease.

[3] *F.* IV. 17. This, on the other hand, is personal; the correspondent seems to be an intimate of some cardinal.

[4] *F.* IV. 18, 19. These, too, are personal; there is remonstrance, but no reproach. "I am your friend, but not of your morals" (*F.* IV. 18) —which is impossible according to his theory of friendship.

[5] *F.* IX. 4. This is unquestionably a real letter written in Italy (probably in 1348 or 1349) to an intimate friend, who knew the circumstances of his passion for "Laura." See above, Chap. VII. p. 233, where I claim it as incontestable proof that the latter was in the married state. It deserves to be quoted entire, but I refrain from this on account of its subject.

[6] *Sen.* VI. 7 and 8 (probably to Zanobi da Strada). The former is sometimes printed in the folios as a separate moral treatise, *De Avaritiâ vitandâ*.

[7] *F.* III. 14—written apparently to one superior to him in station, who was rather an acquaintance than a friend.

[8] *F.* XVI. 4—clearly written to some layman, who had confided to him his religious doubts. I have translated some extracts below (pp. 458–460). See also Chap. XXXIII. on his controversy at Venice.

[9] *F.* VI. 6 and 7, and VII. 9.

in another [1] the language is so enigmatic as to need an Ædipus to resolve it. But, in such cases, why publish the letters at all? The answer must be either that he thought them too good to be lost—in which posterity will not always agree with him—or that his object in publishing them was mainly autobiographical; he wished the world to know his own attitude towards moral obliquities of this kind. The latter was, in my opinion, the predominant motive; and I suspect that, in one or two cases at least, the correspondent was entirely fictitious. He published the letters in later middle life, knowing that there were "spots" in his own career which a strict morality would condemn; and he wished the world to know that they were the faults of impulse, against which his better nature revolted. The letter addressed "To his friends" [2] on the advantages of old age is simply an essay on the subject never actually dispatched; and the apostrophe [3] on the evils caused by the condottieri of the "Great Company" scarcely pretends to be a letter.

If we subtract the above letters and those whose destination is fairly certain, there remain about eighteen, in which he does not give the name of his correspondent. He can scarcely have taken the trouble of asking the permission of his numerous friends before publication [4]; but it is possible that a few may have requested that their names should not appear. The idea of the sacredness of private correspondence is quite modern; and in the Middle Ages, if the question of the property of a letter had ever been raised, it would probably have been held to be vested in the writer rather than in the recipient. It can hardly have been the insignificance of the persons which has caused the omission; for names of several correspondents are given of whom we know nothing. This may have been the reason in the letters [5] of thanks for the return of a horse and for generosity to a messenger. In the case of others,[6] evidently addressed to a real person and

[1] *Var.* 62.

[2] *Sen.* VIII. 2, of November 29, 1366 (probably). See Chap. XXXVII.

[3] *F.* XXIII. 1 (perhaps of 1362). Fracassetti thinks that it was intended for transmission to the Emperor (Charles IV.).

[4] Some of these eighteen may never have been intended by P. for publication (as *Var.* 7, 17, 18, 20, 23 and 62); they were discovered by Fracassetti in his endeavour to complete the extant correspondence.

[5] *Var.* 17 and 20.

[6] As *F.* III. 8 (of which extracts are given below), 15 and 19; VI. 8; VII. 2; XVI. 5; and *Var.* 65.

containing matters of some interest, no sufficient reason can be imagined. In one of these letters,[1] evidently written to an intimate friend, he declines his request that he should write to some stranger of consequence, partly because he was not an Italian, but chiefly because he could think of no subject that he could treat in a manner worthy of his own reputation.

It has been remarked that, with two exceptions,[2] Petrarch always uses the second person singular (" tu ") in addressing his correspondents, and not the second person plural (" vos "), which had become common since the fifth century and is still used in French. He would choose this method of address because he found it in his classical models ; but it may be doubted whether his custom was such an innovation upon the mediæval practice as has been supposed.[3]

[1] *F.* IX. 12.

[2] These are the letters to Cardinal Albornoz (*Var.* 51), and to Giovanni Barili, Seneschal of Provence (*Var.* 57)—perhaps because of their rank and official position. In the latter case at least it was not from slight acquaintance, for Barili was a close friend.

[3] By Kraus (*op. cit.*), pp. 14, 15. Abelard to Héloise and Héloise to Abelard both use the singular ; so, too, does Becket writing to a bishop, and Berenger to St. Bernard, and sometimes our English Archdeacon, Peter of Blois.

LETTERS[1]

F. I. 6.

F. P. to Tommaso Caloria of Messina

A CONTROVERSY WITH LOGICIANS

" *Avignon, March* 11 (? 1335).

". . . You write that an old logician is extremely enraged at my letter, as if I had condemned his trade, that he threatens to write an invective against our studies, and that you have waited many months for his letter in vain. Wait no longer ; trust me, it will never come. He has a grain of modesty left, whether it be from shame at his own style or from an admission of ignorance. The implacable in tongue never enter the lists with the pen. They shrink from exposing the meanness of their equipment ; and so, in Parthian wise, they wage a war of retreat, with a shower of flying words for their airy missiles. With such men it is rash to contend in their own fashion, for their whole pleasure lies in such contention ; their object is not to discover the truth, but to wrangle. Varro has a proverb [2]— ' Through over-much wrangling, truth is lost.' Don't be afraid that they will descend into the open plain of writing and solid conference. . . . [3] I give you this one piece of advice—if your object is virtue and truth, shun that kind of man.

" But how shall we escape such demented folk, if even islands

[1] I do not claim that the following letters are peculiarly typical specimens of the whole correspondence. I have chosen three of those to his early friend Tommaso Caloria, who was about his own age, and with whom he maintained a literary correspondence ; two of those to Colonna di San Vito, who was much older, and to whom he wrote less as a literary exercise than for his correspondent's benefit ; and two to persons unknown, which may serve as specimens of a class of letter standing in some sense apart. Only the two last belong to the last thirty years of his life, so that the others may be considered typical of his early manner ; while the seven are inserted here as being of general rather than biographical interest. The self-satisfied tone of the fifth letter indicates, in my opinion, that it was written in 1342, the year after the laurel-crowning.

[2] This appears to be a slip of memory, such as P. seldom makes. The line is not by Varro, but by Publilius Syrus (44 B.C.), the writer of mimes. P. derives it from Aulus Gellius (XVII. 14) or Macrobius (II. vii. 11).

[3] The omitted sentence alludes to Quintilian, whose work P. did not possess till 1350, and therefore it may be an interpolation of 1359.

are not safe from them? Are Scylla and Charybdis no obstacle to the passage of this plague into Sicily? Nay, I suppose it is the peculiar pest of islands, if to the troop of British logicians a new band of Etnæan Cyclops has to be added. Is this what Pomponius means in his Cosmography when he says that Britain is very like Sicily? I imagined that the likeness lay in their position, in their triangular shape, perhaps in the fact that they are both lashed by the surrounding sea. I forgot the logicians. I had heard that Sicily was inhabited first by the Cyclops, then by the tyrants—both of a truculent type; I did not know that a third kind of monster had arrived, armed with a twice-sharpened enthymeme,[1] and fiercer even than the heat of the coast at Taormina. . . .[2]

"Who does not scorn the silly inferences with which the learned weary themselves and others and waste their whole time? For the last reason especially they are baneful and serve no object, like those derided by Cicero and Seneca. Such was the attack made upon Diogenes by an insolent logician, who said: 'What I am, you are not'; and when Diogenes had assented, he went on, 'I am a man,' and finding no denial, brought up his conclusion, 'Therefore you are not a man.' 'Your conclusion,' replied Diogenes, 'is false; but if you want it to be true, mention me first.'[3] In many most absurd arguments of this kind perhaps they know whether they aim at fame or enjoyment or a good life; I have not the faintest idea. Sordid gain seems no worthy guerdon to nobler spirits; it is good enough for mechanics, but honourable arts have a more generous aim. If you urge this, these people lose their temper, for the verbiage of a disputant generally ends in anger. They reply, 'You are condemning logic.' Far from it. I know that it is one of the liberal arts and a stepping-stone for those who climb the heights; it is a useful equipment for the philosophers' groves; it sharpens the intellect, points the way to truth, warns against fallacy—in short, it makes men ready and acute.

"I admit all this; but it does not follow that we may laudably dally at a point which we have passed with credit. It is the glory of a traveller to pass on quickly and stop nowhere before the end. We are all travellers; in a brief space of time, as on a wintry and rainy day, we are making a long and difficult journey, of which logic should be a part, so long as it is not the end; and it should be a morning, not an evening stage in it. We once did much with credit, which it would be a disgrace to us to do still.

[1] Cf. Juvenal, VI. 448–452. Strictly, the "enthymeme" was an imperfect syllogism, wanting either the conclusion or one of the premises. P. here speaks of it in derision as a weapon of war.

[2] The omitted passages express indignation at the logicians' exclusive claim to Aristotle; P. says he was far more than a logician.

[3] The story is taken from A. Gellius (XVIII. 13).

If we cannot leave in advanced years the schools of dispute where we played as boys, by the same token we should be content to play at 'odds and evens,' [1] to bestride a quivering reed or to be rocked in our infants' cradles. There are marvellous varieties of things and changes of times, by which Nature in her watchful working has met and healed [2] satiety; you may find them not only in the circle of the year, but in far longer periods. Spring abounds in flowers and leafy trees, summer in corn, autumn in fruits, winter in snows. These things are not merely tolerable, but pleasant in their place; if they change places, they will become vexatious through breach of Nature's laws. No one would cheerfully bear winter's frost in summer, or extreme heat in the other months; so there is no one who does not smile at an old man playing about with children, or marvel at a white-haired and gouty boy. What, pray, is so useful, nay, so necessary, to all culture as the first knowledge of our letters, which is the foundation of all study? Yet what more absurd than an old man so employed? Use, then, my exhortations upon the disciples of your veteran; without deterring them from logic, urge them to speed past it to better things; tell him, however, from me that I condemn, not the liberal arts, but boyish old men. For as, in Seneca's words, there is nothing baser than an old man boggling over the elements,[3] so there is nothing more loathsome than an old logician. If he begins to vomit syllogisms, take to flight and bid him argue with Enceladus." [4]

F. I. 11.

"*Fount of the Sorgues, December* 11 (? 1337).

". . . You write that your old logician will not be quiet. Are you surprised? I should marvel if he were; he glories only in noise and abuse. But it is as well that neither has he the power of writing, nor I the power of hearing him here. So, through the intervening space of land and sea, my eyes and ears are safe from his ignorance; the whole weight of his pestilent talk is discharged on your head—and serve you right, for you showed my letter to the logicians. From your account of his raucous growls the first and chief would seem to be his assertion that our profession is the least necessary of all. Is this the invective he had promised? I don't know what 'profession'

[1] Cf. Horace, *Sat.* II. iii. 248.

[2] A literal translation of this sentence is hardly possible; P. here apparently uses "medico" as if it were a deponent.

[3] "Elementarius senex." *Ep. Mor.* 36, 4.

[4] Enceladus was the giant who was fabled to have been killed by Zeus with a flash of lightning and buried under Etna.

he attributes to us, but I suppose he means poetry. This he calls less necessary than the rest. I don't deny it, and our own poets agree. For, as Horace attests,

' To please men's souls was poesy designed,' [1]

and, from the nature of the case, poetry is produced for delight and ornament, not for necessity. So long life to your logician and may he ever overflow with his ' horny syllogisms,' [2] since he agrees with us, and is not so ignorant as I supposed. But in vain is his burning and fervid genius kept within these bounds. Lo ! I see him brandishing a hasty enthymeme. If poetry, says he, is less necessary, it is less noble. It was a poor screen for his madness, after all ; now he shows himself no mere logician, but a madman. Therefore cobbling [3] and baking and the vilest mechanical arts—if necessity can ennoble them—will become the noblest of all ; while philosophy and all the rest, which make life happy, cultured and accomplished—if they contribute nought to the necessities of the vulgar—are ignoble. There you have a doctrine novel, exotic and unknown to their hero Aristotle, whose name they dishonour. Let your friend read the first book of the Metaphysics, and he will find him saying that while all are more necessary (than philosophy) none is more worthy. So I bid your ' ancient ' pursue the truth in regions unknown to him and by a rugged track ; it will be no easy task."

F. I. 10.

F. P. to Tommaso Caloria of Messina

CHARACTER OF A HUNGRY PARASITE

" Your first inquiry came off well, and so, I suppose, you make a second. I imagine you want to test me in a declamation for display.[4] I would rather you had chosen panegyric than its

[1] *Ars Poetica*, l. 377.

[2] The phrase " cornutus syllogismus " is used by St. Jerome in his 69th Epistle for a sophism, whence P. may have borrowed it. A. Gellius (XVIII. ii. 9) mentions a sophistic syllogism, which may have originated this phrase. " What you have not lost you possess ; you have not lost horns ; therefore you possess horns."

[3] In his essay on Bacon Macaulay says that careful induction is not at all necessary to the making of a good syllogism, but it is necessary to the making of a good shoe. His exaltation in that essay of " the arts which increase the outward comforts of the species " at the expense of speculative philosophy is here answered in effect by P.

[4] " Demonstrative genere." The " demonstrativum genus dicendi " is described by Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* III. iv. 14) as a rhetorical exercise in eulogy or vituperation. In English Literature we find something analogous in the *Characters* of Bishop Joseph Hall (1609) and Samuel Butler (1680), in the *Witty Descriptions* of Sir Thomas Overbury (1613) and in the *Microcosmography* of Bishop Earle (1628).

opposite. But since your prefer the latter, and no name is to be used (for exact description takes the place of names) here is an answer to your question.

"The type you mention is he whom Horace describes as a roving buffoon, who had no settled manger, and who, when in want of a dinner, could not tell a citizen from an enemy.[1] In fine, he is the most importunate of all who ever practised the art of a parasite; yet he meets with no more success than if he had been the laziest of them. He is more feared by all men than rocks by the sailor, or hail by the husbandman, or thieves by the man of commerce. All shun him and yield him the path, as if he came studded with prickles. He finds the streets empty, the houses untenanted, the doors closely barred. At his approach men take to flight, as if he carried war in his lap. Such a phenomenon is never more troublesome than at this time of the year; for summer is the haven of paupers. Then a single tree supplies him with dress and food and house and bed; now what is he to do? Winter and old age and poverty are in league against him, and, hardest of all, his misery finds no pity. To-day I saw him tossed in a blustering gale. His clothes were tucked up high, and like Virgil's Venus,

'Loose to the winds his tresses flowed,'[2]

and if

'A cap of fur had tired his head
By spoil of tawny wolf supplied,'[3]

he would in other respects have gone out to war in the garb adopted by the Hernici from the Pelasgi, for 'his left foot was bare.' Such fury impelled him that you would say he matched that headlong parasite in Plautus,[4] who said of himself, 'My fist is a machine, my elbow a catapult, my shoulder a battering-ram'; yet he was such that, with all his threats, you could discern the signs of long starvation. In short—in the words of the same Plautus—'I never saw a man more fasting, more crammed[5] with hunger, or who had less power of achieving his purpose.' When, as if to hide from a pirate's shallop, I slipped into an alley

[1] *Epist.* I. xv. 28, 29.

[2] *Æn.* I. 319 (Conington).

[3] *Æn.* VII. 688–691 (Conington). It is a description of the military dress of the Hernici. The archæological detail as to their connexion with the Pelasgi is taken from Macrobius, *Sat.* V. xviii. 15.

[4] The first quotation is from the *Captivi* (IV. ii. 17, 18), the second from the same play (III. i. 6). M. de Nolhac (*P. et l'Hum.* I. 188) is surely wrong in saying that P. "hardly knew" the comedies of Plautus till about 1350; for this letter is earlier than 1341. The absence of Plautus from the Vaucluse list of his books proves nothing; he may have borrowed it from the Cardinal, or the list may be of earlier date.

[5] The original has "effertum"; P. reads "effractum."

out of his sight, I saw him, as he crossed it, emitting puffs of smoke in the mist, as if I were passing the cave of Cacus or one of the Lipari Isles. I heard a sort of trembling and confused sound issuing from his mouth; so sharply did he mutter that I hardly knew what he meant, but I guess he was exhorting his feet and shoulders with that maxim of the satirist, 'Endure and wait for the summer.' [1] Now you have your wish, you have made me a reviler."

F. III. 13.

F. P. to Giovanni Colonna di San Vito [2]

A FABLE OF THE SPIDER AND THE GOUT, AND ITS APPLICATION

"*Fount of the Sorgues, June* 22 (? 1338 or 1339).

"I am 'prattling to you an old wives' fable,' but it is 'pertinent,' as Horace says.[3]—The Spider one day on her travels chanced to meet the Gout and asked her, 'Whither away in such sad guise?' 'I have lately,' she replied, 'found as entertainer a shaggy peasant, who vexed me with hunger and constant toil. After he had kept me from morn till eve among the clods and the stones, we used to return miserably at a late hour to our dusty and squalid home, never with a whole shoe, always under a heavy load. In that place to luckless day succeeded just as luckless night. The fellow used to comfort me with a sombre meal—old crumbs of a mouldy and stony bread, garlic and tough vegetables, washed down with vinegar and muddy water. It was a 'Saturnalian' treat when a Sardinian cheese [4] was added to the repast. After giving me such a welcome, he put me to bed on a rustic pallet, harder than his clods. In the morning he rose, and returned to the field, to his hateful toil; so day succeeded day, with no rest and no hope of it. For on fête-days he either washed his master's sheep or cleaned out the stream, or put up a fence in the meadows. And so, abhorring my endless woes, and a home so foreign to my character, I took to flight.'

[1] Juv. *Sat.* IX. 69, "Durate atque expectate cicadas"—the last word being used by metonymy for "the summer."

[2] This elderly friend of P. is referred to in Chap. IX. (above). From this letter he would seem to have been a "bon vivant," even after he had entered the Franciscan Order (about 1335). He had had gout before, but P. apparently regards an attack after his "profession" as pointing to a breach of his vow. For extracts from a more humane letter on the same topic see Chap. XIII. (below).

[3] *Sat.* II. vi. 77.

[4] Sardinian cheese is mentioned by Novius (Atellanæ fabulæ, 45), but P. could hardly have seen this. Whence did he get the phrase? The Saturnalia was a religious feast—a sort of week's "Harvest Home" in December.

" On hearing this the Spider exclaimed : ' Alas ! how different was my lot ! The entertainer I had was soft and effeminate—one whose highest, nay, his only, good was pleasure. He seldom set foot out of doors ; his supper he prolonged till dawn, his dinner till evening. The rest of his time he spent in sleep, wooed on a purple couch ; all that remained from banquets and luxury was given to repose. It was a home of exquisite feasts and outlandish scents ; there were foreign wines, golden vessels, jewelled cups, walls hung with silks, floors laid with dyed carpets ; and with all this there was a fussy band of domestics, hurrying in all directions. No part of the house was overlooked, no corner of it unvisited. When the floor was being swept with broom and dust shaken from the panelled ceilings, there was hardly a chance for me to begin the webs of my craft ; and, saddest of all, if I did begin them, I found at their first appearance my hope foiled and my labour in vain. I began my luckless task, and was thrown out headlong ; I looked for chinks and there were none ; a solid wall of snow-white marble left me no place to lodge. And so I fled from my persecutor's face, ready to prefer a quiet exile anywhere in the world to domestic toil without end.' On her saying this, the other replied, ' Ah me ! what hosts of good things are lost from ignorance or neglect ! Ignorance is blindness, neglect is listlessness, of mind ; we must open our eyes, and not put off things we find serviceable. Look now, though from my story and yours it is plain that we have each been in quarters bad for ourselves, it will be splendid if we exchange abodes. Your host will be fittest for me, and mine for you.' The plan was agreed on, and the exchange made, and this is how it happened that the Gout came to dwell amid the delights and in the palaces of the rich, and the Spider in the squalid huts of the poor.

" I hear, my friend, that the Gout has wormed its way into your abode. Strange ! I did not think that there was room for her in so sober a dwelling, yet I fear she may get an ' independent footing ' there. And if it be so, I dread not the mischief so much as its cause ; I would rather your guest were the Spider ! You must resist its first symptoms, and the best mode of resistance is by vigilance, toil and fasting. When I was a boy, I saw a youth with the gout ; I have seen him again as an elderly man and free from gout. On my asking the reason he could give me but one —that he had abstained entirely from wine. Cicero relates—and others after him—that certain rich men, rendered useless by gout, were restored to health as soon as they became poor. I have not bid you be poor ; though if you are wise, I need not. I hear that you have made a ' profession ' of poverty (and of other things) of your own accord. Am I mistaken ? To be sure, within the doors of the ' religious,' especially in the cell of the mendicant there is no room for wealth ; opulence and mendicancy cannot

dwell together. If you shut out poverty, I fear you may be 'treasuring up'—not gold so much as (in the Apostle's words) —'wrath against the day of wrath.'[1] Of this, however, you will take care, for you remember perfectly well the pact that you have made with Christ. If you have forgotten it, read over again the writing of your bond; you will find what you promised to Him and He to you. As I said, I do not bid you be poor—not that it is not good for you to accept faithful counsel, or that it becomes not me to give it—but because I shrink from throwing my words away and speaking in vain. I see that the very name of poverty seems dreadful and disreputable to you; yet, as you have embraced it, you cannot lay it aside at your pleasure. This advice at least I give, that you should live poorly—that is the voluntary poverty, which philosophers call frugality. I am a second Hippocrates to you; and I point out this as the one road to health for your body—a bitter perhaps, but wholesome potion. If you would be in health, live like a poor man. Gold concealed in your coffers damages only your soul; delicate viands damage both soul and body. Henceforward if you would banish the gout, banish rich things; if you would expel every ill, expel riches." [2]

F. VI. 4.

F. P. to Giovanni Colonna di San Vito

A DEFENCE OF HIS USE OF ILLUSTRATIONS [3]

"*Avignon, September* 25 (probably 1342).

"Yes, I use a superabundance of illustrations, but they are famous and true and such as combine authority with amusement. They say I might well use fewer; I am far from denying it—I admit that I could do without them—nay, I could hold my tongue altogether, which would perhaps be wiser; but in all the woes of the world, amidst so many infamies, it is hard to be silent. I may have shown patience enough in not having yet applied my pen to satire, since long before the portents of our day I find it written:

'From writing satire no man can refrain.' [4]

Everywhere I do a great deal both of talking and writing—not so much to benefit my age, whose misery is already desperate, as to disburden myself of my thoughts and console myself by writing. However, if I am asked for a reason of my wealth of illustrations

[1] Romans ii. 5.

[2] I have tried in this way to express P.'s play on words between "deliciæ" and "divitiæ."

[3] P. uses throughout the word "exemplum" which in English has to be rendered in different places by "illustration" or "example" or "instance."

[4] Juv. *Sat.* I. 30.

and for my lingering so lovingly upon them, I shall reply that I presume my reader to be constituted like myself. Nothing moves me so much as the example of famous men. I like to soar, I like to test the solidity and generosity of my mind—whether it is firm and undaunted against fortune, or whether it is deceiving itself. And except by experience—our most unerring mistress—this can be done in no better way than by comparing the mind with those whom it most desires to resemble.

" Therefore, as I thank those writers whom I read for giving me this power of experience by the frequent suggestion of examples, so I trust that my readers will be thankful to me. In that hope perhaps I am mistaken ; but, in reading this account, you will make no mistake, for this is one genuine cause of my practice. Another is that I am writing for myself as well, and in composition I eagerly associate with our ancestors in the only way I can ; most gladly do I forget those with whom it is my unhappy fate to live. In this way I use all the powers of my mind to escape the latter and follow the former. For as the very sight of the one is a grievous offence, so the remembrance of the others and their splendid deeds and famous names affect me with an incalculable sweetness ; if this were known to all, many would be astounded that I should delight in the dead rather than in the living. Yet in very deed they live, who have met their end with virtue and glory ; while those who revel in pleasure and false joys—heavy with wine or pining in self-indulgent ease—though they seem to live, are yet but breathing corpses, loathsome and obscene. Let this, however, remain for ever in dispute between the learned and the ignorant ; I shall pursue my purpose.

" Here is the reply that I should wish made to your question and to the wonder of your associates at my employment of illustrations—that I hope it will profit others, as it has certainly profited myself, when I write and read. Henceforth, since one cannot succeed in pleasing all, let them marvel and condemn as they will. Nay, in order not to seem to have interrupted my method for the murmurs of a few, I will insert some illustrations in this letter to illustrate the force of example. . . .[1]

" Certainly if the statues of the great can kindle imitation in noble minds (as Sallust tells us[2] that Fabius Maximus and Q. Scipio used to say), how much more will this be caused by virtue herself, when she is set forth, not in marble, but by

[1] I omit a page, in which he mentions the bravery of Marius in enduring unbound the surgeon's knife (Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* II. 22) ; the " devotion " of the Decii in three successive generations ; the influence of Miltiades' patriotic example upon Themistocles ; and the effect upon Cæsar's after career of his beholding the statue of Alexander in the temple of Hercules at Gades (Suetonius, *Julius*, cap. 7).

[2] *Bell. Jug.* I. 4.

example ? Perhaps statues give the best expression of the lineaments of men's bodies ; yet the knowledge of their exploits and of their mental and moral character is expressed more fully and completely by words than in the studio. I think I might not unfitly call statues the images of their bodies and illustrative writing the image of their virtues. What shall I say of mental gifts ? Imitation has given to the Latin language one noted pair of stars in Virgil and Cicero, and has produced the result that we no longer yield the palm to the Greeks in any branch of eloquence. While the one follows Homer and the other Demosthenes, the former has equalled his model, the latter has left him far behind.[1]

" I might demonstrate the same thing in every department of effort, did I not shrink from exceeding the limit on the point for which I am reproved. Yet I cannot refrain from inserting one instance which you know well.[2] For to Augustine, as he was long hesitating as to what path in life to take, the example of Antony and of Victorinus, the orator and martyr, were of benefit—aye and the sudden conversion of those two business men at Tréves, of which the Emperor's soldier Pontianus [3] had told him ; you have the very words of Augustine in the eighth book of the *Confessions* (unless my memory fails me). ' I was on fire to imitate them.' That is why he tells the story ; and that is the explanation of my practice to all who observe and wonder at me. I see how examples lead to virtue ; I know what an effect they have upon me ; and I hope for the same effect in others. If I am wrong, there is no harm done ; those who do not like illustrations need not read me. I put no force upon any man ; and if you ask me, I would rather be read by the few."

F. III. 8.

F. P. to an unknown correspondent

A DIATRIBE AGAINST ALL PRETENDED KNOWLEDGE OF THE FUTURE

(Undated.) [4]

" Pray let us abandon, if we can, both sad memories of the past and troubled anxiety about the future ; they torture us

[1] I do not know whether P. had any Latin authority for this judgment. (Cf. however, Quintilian, X. i. 85, 105.) If it is his own, it is a bold one, as he could not read Homer and Demosthenes.

[2] For San Vito's knowledge of history after A.D. 300 see *F.* VI. 2 (above, p. 345).

[3] *Confessions*, VIII. c. 15. The modern texts read " Pontitianus."

[4] From its position in the collection this should be an early letter ; but the last two in *F.* III. belong to 1346, and I think that in the latter part of that book are placed together several of various dates. P. was a friend of the friar-bishop Dionisio Roberti, who was a protegé of King Robert,

to no purpose and, as with a double sting, perturb the repose of our life. Why should we sob and afflict ourselves? We can neither change what has been done nor foresee what is to come. What good can we get from astrologers, against whom the authority not only of the saints, but of philosophers and poets and all sensible people cries aloud? And (to omit the philosophers) who knows not Virgil's famous testimony:

'Ah for the ignorant minds of seers!' [1]

We know that saying of Accius—'I put no faith in augurs; they enrich the minds of others with words that they may stuff their own houses with gold,' aye and the other line of the 'ancient' Pacuvius:

'Foretellers to Jove's powers aspire.' [2]

And in this, remember, the prophet [3] agrees with the poet, for Isaiah says, 'Show the things that are to come, that we may know that ye are gods.' So I consider that the advice of the learned Favorinus [4] (Ciceronian in the main) in dissuading us from tricks and jugglery, must be not only admitted, but extended. For these promisers, who engage to declare the future, foretell evil, *either* falsely—in which case they vainly fill us with empty terror —*or* truly, and make us miserable before the time. Conversely, *either* they give us good news truly—in which there is a double disadvantage, in the weariness of expectation (which is extreme) and in the diminishing of the joy when it comes as well as in what Favorinus calls the 'premature tarnishing' of it, since it has long disappeared, through hope and mental preoccupation, before it comes: *or* they give such news falsely; and the empty and absurd joy is sure, from grief and shame at lost hopes, to come to an end. Therefore such men must not be listened to, for they promise things beyond their power and of no profit to us.

"Let every man, then, suppose that Christ has said to him what in fact Jupiter says to Amphitryon in Plautus [5]:

who both practised judicial astrology; and at the time of his panegyric upon the former to the latter (*Ep. Metr.* I. xiii., about April, 1342) either his opinions against astrology were not formed, or he was unworthily concealing them to please the king. (See Chap. XV.) We may perhaps give him the benefit of the doubt and assign a date after 1345, since his two chief letters against astrology (*Sen.* I. 7 and III. 1) belong to his later years.

[1] *Æn.* IV. 65.

[2] These quotations from Accius and Pacuvius are taken from the *Noctes Atticæ* of A. Gellius (XIV. 1), as also are the arguments of Favorinus below.

[3] Isa. xli. 23. The "propheta" of the Paris MS. is better than Fracassetti's "philosophus."

[4] Favorinus was a philosopher of the reign of Hadrian and friend of Plutarch. His works are not extant.

[5] *Amphitr.* V. ii. 1–4.

> ' Amphitryon, thou art pious ; I am here
> To succour thee and thine ; there's nought to dread ;
> Dismiss thy prophets and thy soothsayers ;
> I'll tell thee what is past, and what's to come
> Far better than can they '—

not, as he says—' for I am Jove, but ' for I am God.' Surely God often speaks to the ear of our heart ; and if we desire to hear Him, we can soon despise the promises of these quacks. Death is certain ; its hour is uncertain, in order that we may wait for every hour as if it might be the last ; to have a wholesome knowledge of this, is enough. What impudence, then, it is in them, what madness in us, if they torture us with a disclosure of time to some, wrapped as that is in darkness and known only to God !

" Yet in all this vanity one thing makes me marvel—that though in ordinary matters all truth-telling people would incur the shame of lying for a single patent falsehood, yet this class, while liars through and through, get the character of telling the truth by one chance lapse into it ! Cicero wonders at this, though in a different way, in that book in which he raises a temple to Divination and overthrows it. But Augustine gives a reason for the fact, both elsewhere and in his book, *On Diverse Questions*. He is chiefly speaking against those who are now called ' astrologers ' [1]—men who would subject our acts to the heavenly bodies, would sell us to the stars and pocket the price. According to him, when these are said to have often foretold truly, the reason is that men do not remember their falsehood and errors, but, being intent on occurrences which have fulfilled their predictions, they forget those which have not done so ; the things remembered are those which happened—not through their system (which has no existence) but—by a sort of mysterious chance. But if these be attributed to astrological skill, let them grant professional divination also to certain lifeless written parchments,[2] by which men are pleased to put their destiny to the test. But if it is not by skill that a verse from a manuscript foretells the future, what wonder if, by chance and not by skill, there come from the mind of a speaker some prediction of the future ? These last are Augustine's words, commended to us both by his personal

[1] Cf. J. E. B. Mayor (on Juvenal, *Sat.* XIV. 248), Vol. II. 329, 331 (ed. 3, 1881). The word used (as at the beginning of the letter) is " mathematici." A law of Diocletian, while praising " geometry," speaks of " mathematics " as " damnabilis et omnino interdicta." Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, I. 41, n.

[2] On the *Sortes Virgilianæ* see Chap. IX. p. 327, n. 5. Perhaps this letter shows some belief in these, since he often speaks of " Fortune " as if she were a divinity. The incredulity, however, of the whole letter, is very remarkable for the time. Bodin's *Republic* (1577)—" the greatest political work of the sixteenth century " (Lecky, I. 277, n.)—asserts the power of the stars over societies.

authority and his (Christian) faith. You may be sure that all these fallacies take their rise simply from the ignorance of the vulgar and from the greedy passion—I might call it rage—for knowing things which it is neither possible nor expedient to know. Shun, then, this rash and headstrong brood—the enemies of a quiet life—if you would spend it, as far as you may, without superfluous and empty cares. For rest assured that until you have cast off the weight of superstition, you may wish for the blessed life but you cannot attain it. Things that are contraries expel each other; fear and felicity cannot dwell together."

F. XVI. 4.

F. P. to a Friend not named

A PROTEST AGAINST DISBELIEF IN THE POSSIBILITY OF SALVATION

"(*Vaucluse*) *March* 29 (1353).

"I hope to talk to you in person about other things, but I must write on one matter of the utmost peril, which brooks no delay. I am displeased at your suspicions about the supreme tenet of salvation, as I have often told you to your face—but not so often as I ought to have done, or as was needful to break your hard heart. It seems to me a mere quibble and a snare of the devil against the thinker's mind to put forward the undeniable fact that mankind is unworthy of the heavenly deed, which we believe has been done. You assert this because the whole world is full of thieves, perjurers, slanderers and such like, of whom we read that the Creator said, 'It repenteth Me that I have made them'; and I suppose you are ready to ask, 'How could He in His greatness do such a thing, for creatures so unworthy?' But you should consider that all this ought to conduce not to unbelief, but to humility and thankfulness. I allow that few are worthy of God's benefits—nay, none at all, except those whom He has made worthy. His kindness, then, is all the greater, His liberality the more splendid, His clemency the more signal.

"Your suspicion, it seems, is enhanced because, as we all admit, there were many men mentally and morally excellent before Christ's coming; and we ourselves to-day are totally destitute of virtue and good disposition. Would that this were less plain! It makes the mind reel, and refuse to believe in the fact, because it cannot see the reason for it. But this is a point which ought to increase our love and devotion, and not produce unbelief; for the more unworthy we admit we are, so much the more should we confess and marvel at His bounty, and not carry our wonder so far as to deny it. He is the worst kind of servant who, when highly and undeservedly honoured by his master,

either rebels against him, or forgets the benefits received. Rather he says, 'Thou hast loved me freely, and preferred me, all unworthy, to better men; I give thee thanks, I acknowledge thy goodness and the splendour of thy gifts. Too happy, I receive the rewards of virtue without possessing it; I owe this thy kindness not to my toil, but to none other than thyself.' You have then, mortal mannikin though you be, ground for thanksgiving, and not for unbelief. You have been made happier than you could have credited; believe in the accomplished fact. . . .[1]

"You are sure that He *could* set you free, why should you doubt His will to do it? Why shrink from believing in a fact so necessary to yourself, so easy to the Giver and so utterly worthy of His Majesty? Why fear to admit that which you should earnestly desire, unless for the reason that in your tiny mind you cannot imagine so great a joy, and you feel yourself unworthy of it? You have ground for rejoicing with your whole heart—such ground as you can scarcely conceive; hence it befits you to be comforted the more, not to believe the less. . . . Granted that it is hard to believe that good has been returned for evil, favour for offence—by Him, above all, Who so little deserves the offence, and could so easily revenge it; yet believe we must, and acknowledge the mercy of our Redeemer. . . .

"So we must banish despair, cast off hardness, put away iniquity, relinquish unbelief. No sane man is unaware that nothing is impossible, or even difficult, to God; every good man is sure that He finds nothing hard that belongs to the salvation of His creatures. It is perverse to suspect either that God cannot, or that He will not, pity us and put away our sins; this is the source of despair to those who by the first suspicion deny His power, by the second deny His goodness. Both sins are blasphemies against the Holy Ghost, and are not forgiven in this world or the next, so long as they attribute to the Almighty and the All-Good either want of power or want of will to save us.

"Into this fault we believe that Cain fell, when he said, 'My wickedness is too great to be forgiven'[2]; for there is no misery of the creature too great for the compassion of the Creator. Such, too, was the fault of unhappy Judas, when, throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he went and hung himself. Even in his case, though he had sinned much more than Cain, his despair was the only obstacle to his finding mercy,

[1] I omit a page in which P. enlarges, with apposite quotations from St. Augustine, on the fact of the Incarnation as the supreme proof of God's goodness and the only way in which human nature could be redeemed.

[2] P. is quoting the Vulgate, where (as also in the Septuagint) this translation is preferred. The Authorized and Revised Versions of the English Bible admit it to the margin, but render in the text, "My punishment is greater than I can bear."

which Ambrose thinks he would have found, if he had sought it from Christ. But he did not seek it, and confessed his sin to those who rejoiced in it and cared not for his punishment. In Jerome's opinion he did more injury to Christ by his despair than by his treachery—a saying to be remembered.

"God, then, can do all that He wills; and He wills everything that tends to our salvation. This we must hold with firm and constant trust. Away with all vain and timid conjectures, and close your ears to the whispers of demons! It was great that God should be born for us in His marvellous love, greater that He should pass His life in all our necessities and miseries, greatest of all that He should die a death worse than the common lot, painful to Himself, but full of mercy to us. Who cannot see in this a strange and ineffable proof of His Divine love? Is the very greatness of the benefit to be the cause of our ingratitude? Far be such madness from loyal hearts! We must feel ourselves unworthy of such mighty benefits, admit our utter inability to return due thanks even in word, confess our frailty to be vanquished by His boundless forbearance, remaining as grateful and obedient and faithful believers as we can. Nor, through the greatness of the gift and our own unworthiness, must we despair of His power and will to do the best for us, according to the matchless excellence of His Almighty tenderness."

EXCURSUS III

ON THE "NEW CHRONOLOGY" OF PETRARCH'S EARLY YEARS

IN the previous chapters I have deliberately followed the "old chronology" of de Sade and Fracassetti, because I am confident that in its main lines it is correct. An attempt, however, has recently been made by Signor Lo Parco [1] to discredit it by alleging that the return from Bologna, the summer at Lombez and the journey in the north should all be placed a year earlier—that is to say, in the years 1325, 1329 and 1332 respectively.

It is an unfortunate circumstance, which has given his biographers much trouble, that Petrarch's letters, while usually giving the day and the month, seldom indicate the year in which they were written. We have often to depend for the chronology upon a chance allusion, or upon a comparison of several letters, or—worst of all—upon a vague and sometimes inaccurate reminiscence in old age. In Chapters II. and III. I have given instances of his inconsistency in dating some lesser events of his youth, but these variations are in themselves of no serious importance. Such a shifting of dates, however, as Lo Parco suggests, alters the connexion of the life with contemporary events; and if it is to win acceptance, it should be supported by positive statements of the poet in later letters before he retired to Arquà in 1369. In middle life he may be trusted to date correctly the outstanding events of his early manhood; but in his last five years he made more than one serious mistake in the chronology of his life. This is one of the reasons why I judge the early part of the *Letter to Posterity*, which is carefully dated, to belong to his Milan period (1353–1362).

Now the evidence of this kind that we have, including that

[1] In three articles, all apparently published in 1906, viz. *Errori e Inesatezze della Biografia del P.*, in *Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana*, Vol. XLVIII. fasc. 12, pp. 36–69; *Il P. e la faniglia dopo il suo prino ritorno in Avignone*, in *Rassegna critica della Letteratura Italiana*, IX. fasc. 1, pp. 1–15; and *Il P. nel Casentino*, in *Rivista d'Italie*, IX. fasc. 4, 595–617. I have not seen the second article; but I presume from citations that it is merely a brief résumé of the first, which contains his main arguments.

letter, supports the " old " rather than the " new " chronology. In *Var.* 25—plainly written to Boccaccio on August 18, 1360, since it alludes to his correspondent's visit to Milan in the previous year—Petrarch says that it was thirty years since he journeyed to Lombez with Giacomo Colonna and nineteen since the latter's death—*i.e.* he places the two events in 1330 and 1341, the last being historically the correct date. In *Sen.* X. 2 (to Gui Sette, written probably between 1366 and 1368), which shows some sign of failing powers, there is no such linking up with the moment of his writing ; but he allows an interval of four years between each of the three events, whose date is in dispute, or eight years between the first and the last—between the return from Bologna and the northern journey (his expression in both cases is " quarto anno "). The reminiscence is in the main accurate, for " quarto anno " need not mean a full four years ; and the total, if we assume that the last journey ended in August,[1] is seven years and four months. Both systems allow only three full years between the second and third events—the stay at Lombez and the journey in the north ; for in *F.* I. 5, Petrarch expressly names that interval though he speaks of the summer when he was writing as " the fourth summer " (including that at Lombez). But the whole question really hinges upon the date of his return from Bologna.

It was formerly supposed that this question was settled by the letter on the ascent of Mont Ventoux (*F.* IV. 1), which took place less than three years after the journey to Paris (see Chap. IX. above, p. 322, n. 4). Petrarch, speaking to himself, there says of the day of the ascent (April 26) : " To-day ['hodie'] is being completed the tenth year since . . . thou didst leave Bologna." Since we know that he was at Bologna in November, 1325, and that he was at Avignon on April 6, 1327, it is evident that these words, naturally interpreted, imply that he left the University on April 26, 1326, and therefore that his ascent of Mont Ventoux took place on April 26, 1336. Lo Parco, however, is anxious to prove that the ascent happened in 1335, and that he left Bologna in November or December, 1325, in consequence of a secession of students to Imola, which even the one authority he depends upon (Griffone's *Chronicle*) does not place in any particular month (see above, p. 131, n. 3). He therefore adopts a non-natural interpretation of the words quoted above, asserting that " hodie " is used in its general sense of " at this time," and that if Petrarch had meant the day of the ascent he would have

[1] Lo Parco decides in his arbitrary way (first article, p. 67) that P. was detained by the heat at Lyons for two months—*i.e.* till October. Koerting and de Nolhac, who wish to prove a different thesis (that the letter on Thule was written in 1333), confine his stay to less than a week !

said " hac die." It is not enough to say that " hodie " can bear that meaning. Proof is required not only that Petrarch is in the habit of using it in that sense (the two instances given, in my opinion, both admit of the simpler meaning), but also that his ensuing reflections would be naturally suggested by anything but the *actual anniversary* of so important an era in his life. No one reading the passage without " an axe to grind " would dream of supposing that " hodie decimus annus completur " refers to the middle of the tenth year. Indeed, the suggestion is a peculiarly unfortunate one for three different reasons: (1) That in this very letter he uses " hodie " in two other places (Frac. I. 194 and 196, cf. " hodiernum iter," 197) for the day of writing; (2) that on the next page he speaks of " exactum decennium " (Frac. I. 199), which means naturally, "the completed ten years"; and (3) that Petrarch's moral reflections were evidently inspired by the coincidence of the two events upon the same day of the month. I have never met with a more deliberate attempt to make a document square with a preconceived theory.

Fortunately, however, we have a still more conclusive proof that the ascent took place on April 26, 1336. Petrarch says at the end of the letter (Frac. I. 202) that they had a full moon (" luna pernox ") to aid them in their descent. It so happens that in 1336, Easter Day, which is the Sunday following the full moon, fell on March 31; therefore the moon would have been again at the full, or near it, on April 26. In 1335 Easter fell on April 16, so that in that year the descent must have taken place when the evening was moonless; and this disadvantage Petrarch, though not experienced in mountaineering, evidently had sense enough to avoid.

I have already said on another point (see Excursus II. p. 190, n. 2) that the theories of Lo Parco are like a house of cards; if you subtract one card at the foundation, the whole structure collapses. In this case the " card " is the date of *F.* IV. 1. I have already, I believe (in Chap. IV. p. 134, n. 2), fully answered the historic doubts which Lo Parco tries to raise about the date of Petrarch's first letter (*F.* I. 1) of April 18, 1326. But when his main thesis as to the date of *F.* IV. 1 is demolished, these doubts become of no importance whatever. The same may be said of his laboured attempt to prove (pp. 63–67) that the northern tour was in 1332, and that the mission of the Bishop of Lombez [1] to Rome was caused, not by the conflict between the Orsini and Colonna in 1333, but by the events of the previous year, which

[1] The supposition is gratuitous, for in fact little is known of these events at Rome. The phrase quoted by Lo Parco as from *F.* I. 4 (" et domus et patriæ laboribus et vocibus excitatus ") is not in that letter, but in *F.* IV. 12. These little " inexactitudes " should not be committed by so stern a censor of his predecessors.

led up to that conflict. *F.* IV. 1 was written, as a passage in that letter plainly shows (Frac. I. 198), less than three years after Petrarch's visit to Paris ; and since that letter is proved to belong to 1336, the northern tour took place in the spring of 1333. But before he left Lyons in the latter year, Petrarch wrote *F.* I. 5 to the Bishop, in which he says he was three years older than when he was at Lombez ; therefore the summer at Lombez was that of 1330. The journey thither was undertaken four years after his return from Bologna (*Sen.* X. 2), therefore he returned thence in 1326. The chain is complete ; and Lo Parco's attempt to prove that he must have gone to Lombez in 1329, to which I have referred in the notes (Chap. IX.), falls to the ground.

The matter is chiefly of importance because the views of this writer affect all the dates of Petrarch's early life. If his system be adopted, the dates of the poet's stay at the Universities of Montpellier and Bologna must be put back a year in each case ; and since Lo Parco is wedded to the theory of Corazzini about the second marriage of Petracco, he has a transparent motive for antedating these events. It is quite possible to refute all his ingenious arguments seriatim ; but since the main question is settled by establishing the date of *F.* IV. 1, it is scarcely worth while.

EXCURSUS IV

CONTEMPORARY PORTRAITS OF PETRARCH[1]

AMONG the multitudinous portraits of the poet there are several which claim to rest on "an ancient picture"[2]; but their variety is such that they have evidently not descended from a common original. "Some of them," says M. de Nolhac,[3] "make him a beardless, languishing lover or an elegant, moustached cavalier"; others represent him as a "comical old fogey, ugly, peevish and ridiculous." Even during his lifetime his fame was so great that without having seen him in the flesh, artists ventured to portray him according to their fancy, whether friendly or the reverse. The so-called portraits, in which he wears the laurel crown,[4] should be viewed with peculiar distrust, for it was simply a patent deivce to indicate his identity. Three frescoes are said to have been executed during his life, into which his figure was introduced—(1) that in the Spanish chapel of Sta. Maria Novella at Florence (once ascribed to Simone of Siena)[5]; (2) that on the ceiling of the Strozzi chapel in the same church by Andrea Orcagna (1306–1368); and (3) that in the Ardinghelli chapel of Sta. Trinita at Florence by the Camaldulensian monk Don Lorenzo. The last fresco has now disappeared, and it probably belonged not to the fourteenth century, but to the first decade of the fifteenth.[6]

[1] I am much indebted here to P. de Nolhac's Excursus I. ("L'Iconographie de P.") in his *P. et l'Hum.* (1907), II. 245–257, and to Appendix I. ("Iconography") in the *Catalogue of the* (*Fiske*) *Petrarch Collection, Cornell University* (Oxford, 1916), pp. 497–503.

[2] So with the so-called "Volpi" portrait, which first appears in the Paduan edition of the *Rime* (1732).

[3] *Op. cit.* p. 248.

[4] This is especially true of the "Tofanelli Morghen" engraving, which appears in the "Bohn" Petrarch (1859), and which the Cornell Appendix connects with the imaginary P. in the Raphael fresco (see below).

[5] See above, Chap. VII. p. 252, n. 5.

[6] E. d'Auriac (*Laure et P.*, Amiens, 1882, p. 29) says that the portrait in the Uffizi Gallery, which he attributes to Andrea del Sarto (1489–1530), was based on this fresco; but there seems to be no ground for his statement that Don Lorenzo had known P.

It is most unlikely that any of these three were taken from life. The figure in Orcagna's fresco may be based on description; but it has very little in common [1] with the portraits which, as we shall see, have the best claim to contain a likeness. The fresco in the Spanish chapel of the same church is of doubtful attribution; there may even be no foundation for the tradition, recorded first by Vasari,[2] that Petrarch is there depicted. Two frescoes of later date deserve a passing notice. That by Andrea del Castagno (1370–1457), which was painted for the Villa Pandolfini at Legnaia, but is now in the Museum at Florence, may be founded on traditional description; it has some points of resemblance to the contemporary miniature in the Paris MS. 6069 *F.* (see below).[3] It is a "full length," with close hood and without the laurel; the poet stands beside Dante and Boccaccio—his fellows in the literary "triumvirate" of the fourteenth century. The youthful countenance of the Petrarch, with hood and laurel, in Raphael's fresco, "Il Parnaso," in the Vatican (1511) is a pure work of fancy [4]; but it is a noble face, worthy of the poet's renown.

It was a common practice after the invention of printing to insert portraits of both lovers (generally imaginary) in the editions of the *Rime*. But supposed portraits are often found in the illuminated fifteenth-century manuscripts of these poems. One in a Roman library [5] has a picture of the poet seated in his narrow library with a favourite cat at his feet; the face seems to correspond with neither the authentic nor the conventional types. Two fifteenth-century MSS. of the *Rime* at Rome and at Florence also contain a portrait of the poet. The first—a large miniature in the Vatican "*lat.* 3198," a MS. of the *Rime* which once belonged to the Florentine family of the Albizzi (Petrarch's relatives) and afterwards to the library of Fulvio Orsini—has been described by Cozza-Luzi, sub-librarian of the Vatican, who first discerned its importance.[6] The MS. is late fourteenth century; but M. de Nolhac considers [7] that the miniature may be copied from

[1] F. A. Wulff (*P. at Vaucluse*, Lund, 1904) gives a reproduction of this fresco. He thinks that the two horizontal wrinkles in the P. portrait recall the miniature in de Nolhac's *Par.* 6069 *T.* (see below). But the portrait seems to me far more like the unconvincing miniature in the Laurentian MS. of the *Rime*.

[2] *Lives of the Painters* (Bohn), I. 185.

[3] De Nolhac (*op. cit.*), p. 254.

[4] *Ibid.* p. 248.

[5] The "Biblioteca Trivulziana," in a fifteenth-century MS. of the *Rime* (cod. 905). It is reproduced in colour as the frontispiece to *P. e la Lombardia* (Milan, 1904) by various authors.

[6] See his paper, "Del ritratto di F. P. in Cod. Vat. 3198," in *Giornale Arcadico*, ser. 3, No. 1 (Rome, 1898). The miniature is reproduced by F. A. Wulff in *op. cit.* No. II., see p. 19.

[7] De Nolhac, *op. cit.* p. 255.

a portrait painted from the life. Presumably—though he does not expressly say so—he means the portrait in the Paris MS. (mentioned in the last paragraph), which he has chosen as the frontispiece of his *Pétrarque et l'Humanisme*, t. I. (see the frontispiece of this volume). The authors of the sumptuous work on Petrarch in art write [1]: "The identity of the two likenesses is incontestable. (In the later) the profile remains the same, but the soul has gone out of it. It is a pedant, not a poet, whom we have before us." The clothing is white, but the front part of the double hood [2] is of blue, bordered with green. It shows the same length and firmness of the upper lip seen in its prototype; but the expression of the mouth and chin is quite different. The other fifteenth-century MS. of the *Rime* contains a portrait, which is far less important; but it has been more widely used to represent the poet.[3] It is the *Cod. Plut.* XLI. No. 1 in the Laurentian Library at Florence, and has a companion portrait of "Laura" (already described).[4] The Petrarch portrait, like that in the Vatican, is in profile and has a double hood; but the head faces left instead of right, and the front part of the hood (here coloured orange) is surmounted by the laurel wreath. M. de Nolhac calls this "un Pétrarque assez ridicule" [5]; it is certainly wholly lacking in the beauty and dignity belonging to the companion picture of "Laura." There is no foundation for the statement sometimes made that these miniatures are the work of Simone Martini.[6]

It may naturally be asked whether there is any evidence in the poet's voluminous works that his portrait was taken from life. There is none whatever that Martini painted it at the time when he painted the miniature of "Laura" [7]; and Vasari's statement that Simone was sent to Avignon for that purpose by Pandolfo Malatesta[8] is a conjecture, based perhaps on tradition, but

[1] V. Masséna (Prince d'Essling) and Eugène Müntz, *Pétrarque: ses études d'art, son influence sur les artistes, ses portraits, ceux de Laure, l'illustration des ses écrits*, profusedly illustrated (Paris, 1902), p. 67. I much regret that I have had no direct access to this invaluable work.

[2] I avoid the term "cowl," because it is popularly supposed to cover only a monk.

[3] By M. Henry Cochin in his *P. ennemi des femmes* (Paris, 1886) and by Mr. H. C. Hollway-Calthrop in his *P.'s Life and Times* (1907). Engravings and medallions of the Laurentian miniatures are common in Florence.

[4] See above, Chap. VII. p. 252.

[5] *Op. cit.* p. 246.

[6] M. de Nolhac says confidently (p. 246) that they are of the fifteenth century.

[7] I indicate in Chap. XIII. my view that the inscriptions on the "Peruzzi" bas-reliefs are an imposture. Essling and Müntz come to much the same conclusion (p. 69).

[8] Vasari (*ed. cit.*), I. p. 191.

demonstrably false.[1] That capable soldier was a great admirer of the poet long before he became his "warm friend," and in those early days he proved his admiration by sending a painter to take a surreptitious portrait.[2] Petrarch does not say where he was at the time; and the incident may have happened at Parma or Verona just as probably as at Avignon. After Pandolfo had contracted a friendship with the poet at Milan in 1356, he was dissatisfied with the first picture, and sent another painter of high merit [3] to take a portrait without the knowledge of his model. Petrarch discovered the ruse, though he unwillingly permitted the artist to continue his sketch; but the verdict alike of his friends and himself was that this portrait, too, was a failure. We may assume that both these portraits have perished, for nothing is known of their subsequent fate or of the artists' names. About the time when the second was executed, Petrarch paid a visit to his fervent admirer, Enrico Capra, the goldsmith of Bergamo, where he found his own "arms, name *and portrait* in every corner of the house" [4]—a clear proof that what at least passed as a likeness of the popular poet could then be obtained by the rich. His last days were spent in the dominions of Francesco da Carrara, the lord of Padua, whose friendship for him was such that he must have desired to possess some memorial of his outward appearance.

There still exists at Padua, in the hall of the Bishop's palace, a fresco representing the poet, of which the later history at any rate is certain. It formerly adorned a wall in the house near the cathedral, where some of the canons in Petrarch's day resided, and where he himself occasionally lodged; and before that building was demolished in 1581,[5] the fresco was saved by a professor in the University,[6] in whose family it remained till 1816, when it was presented to the Bishop Dondi dell' Orologio (a descendant of Petrarch's friend of that name [7]) and transferred

[1] See Chap. XIII. for the circumstance that brought Simone to Avignon.

[2] *Sen.* I. 6 (to Francesco Bruni), probably of 1358.

[3] "Magnum prorsus artificem" (*ibid.*), B. edn. p. 825. It is tantalizing that he does not give us his name.

[4] *F.* XXI. 11 (to Neri Morando), "Signum, nomen, imaginen . . . in omnibus domus suæ angulis" (Frac. III. 91).

[5] Its destruction was ordered by the Bishop, Cardinal Pisani, and created a flutter in the literary dovecote of the day. The aged dramatist Speroni and the dialect-writer Angelo Beolco (il Ruzzante) published strong protests, which are still extant.

[6] G. B. Selvatico, Professor of Canon Law. The following inscription now appears under the picture:

"Hunc F. P. imaginem, quæ, ex ejus domus ruinis olim translata in ædas Silvaticæ gentis, nunc Petri March. de Silvaticis liberalitate Anno MDCCCXVI. Pontifex Patavinus H. P. C."

[7] Giovanni Dondi dell' Orologio, his physician.

to his palace. This portrait was first engraved [1] for Marsand's Paduan edition of the *Rime* (1819–1820), and an excellent photogravure of it appears in the work, *Padova a Francesco Petrarca*, published on the fifth centenary of his death in 1874.[2] The picture is a " half-length," with the face in profile and the hands joined as if in prayer ; the hood is thrown back in order to show the forehead, which is broad, but retreating rather than high.[3] Marsand considered [4] that it might be the work of the famous Paduan painter Guariento (flourished about 1365) or one of his school. M. de Nolhac, however, while admitting it to be of the fourteenth century, thinks there is nothing to show that it was taken from life, and that the poet's attitude may imply that it was a posthumous memorial of his piety, provided at the expense of some of his colleagues.[5] If this be so, the painter may have seen the poet, or at least modelled it upon some existing picture done from life.

The same may be said, with even greater confidence, of the first (perhaps of all) of the three miniatures in early MSS. of Petrarch's Latin works, which profess to represent him. These occur in two MSS. of the National Library at Paris—6069 *F.*, which is the dedicatory copy of the *De Viris Illustribus* prepared for Francesco da Carrara, and 6069 *T.*, which is a copy of Petrarch's *Rerum Memorandarum*, possibly made under his own supervision—and in another at Venice of the Latin works (*Cod.* I. VI. No. 86), where Petrarch is figured in the initial letter of the *De Remediis*. By far the most important of the three is the miniature in *Par.* 6069 *F.*, which is the frontispiece of this volume. That MS. contains a work which he had promised to dedicate to the lord of Padua, who may have borne the cost of the preparation and decoration of this copy—plainly destined for his own perusal. The volume contains traces of the erasure of Carrara's arms, for which the escutcheon of the Visconti has been substituted.[6] It therefore once belonged to the library of the former, which was transferred to Pavia, with the rest of his possessions, by his conqueror Gian Galeazzo.[7] Petrarch had not completed this series of lives at the time of his death ; but a large proportion of the work was finished, and therefore the

[1] By Bozza da Mauro Gandolfi of Bologna. See A. Marsand's note on the picture.

[2] It contains, besides the above note, G. Cittadella's *P. a Padova e ad Arquà* and F. Corradini's splendid edition of the *Africa*.

[3] So it appears in Finzi's description (*F. P.* 1900), p. 91, summarizing the study of P.'s skeleton by G. Canestrini (*Le ossa di F. P.*, Padua, 1874).

[4] Marsand's note (*sup. cit.*), p. 6.

[5] *P. et l'Hum.* II. pp. 249, 250.

[6] P. de Nolhac, *Le " De Viris Illustribus " de P.* (Paris, 1890), pp. 17, 18.

[7] For the circumstances see my paper on " The Library of P." in *Fortnightly Review* (No. 474, new series, June, 1906), to be revised as Chap. XXXIV. of this work.

transcription may possibly—though no proof is available—have been begun under his own direction. A note on the last page states, after a formal dedication, that the copy was made by Lombardo della Seta, his literary executor, who supplied the missing lives, and that it was completed on January 25, 1379—four and a half years after Petrarch's death.[1] M. de Nolhac considers it practically certain that the ornamentation of the MS. by two illustrations on the preliminary sheet was contemporary with the transcription. These illustrations now remain to be described. On the right-hand page, above the title, is a pen-design representing "Glory," attended by winged figures and distributing crowns of laurel to two groups of knights in full armour and with horses caparisoned.[2] On the opposite page (left), in the position of a frontispiece, is a simple portrait of the poet, done in bistre with touches of cinnabar; it is a "half-length" and the face is in profile. The dress is the usual scholar's cape with hood drawn over the forehead and ears, and without the laurel.[3] The face is of a man advanced in years; while the firm upper lip and the lines of the mouth betoken a certain severity. The two sketches are probably by the same hand, which is that of an artist of experience. M. de Nolhac thinks that there is a certain resemblance between the portrait and the fresco last described; but the distinguishing feature of the latter—the retreating forehead—is absent, or at least concealed by the covering hood. He also notes that the portrait is in accord with the description of Petrarch in old age given by Vergerio [4] as "of middle height, with full face and rounded limbs (in old age verging on corpulence), complexion between fair and swarthy and vivacious eyes."

The last feature, if less prominent in this profile portrait, is especially noticeable in the miniature of the MS. at St. Mark's, Venice, which adorns the initial letter "C" of a fourteenth-century *De Remediis Utriusque Fortunæ*. This picure has a three-quarters face, with two long wrinkles on the forehead, a sharp mouth, a long nose and lowered eyes, which show a gentle expression in their blue pupils.[5] It suggests at once a livelier and a milder temperament than the former portrait—an effect which may be due to its being taken more in full face. The hood is coloured red (it is a red-brown in the next miniature),

[1] See de Nolhac's Excursus I. (*sup. cit.*), p. 252.

[2] A similar design is prefixed to another MS. of the *De Viris* (*Paris*, 6069 *I.*), which is also of the fourteenth century, but somewhat later than 6069 *F.*

[3] De Nolhac (*op. cit.*), p. 250.

[4] See the Latin life of P. by P. P. Vergerio in de Sade, t. III. (*Pièces Justificatives*, III. p. 13).

[5] P. de Nolhac (*op. cit.*); p. 257. He has reproduced this miniature as a frontispiece to tom. II. of his *Pétrarque et l'Humanisme* (1907).

lined with green. Closely allied with this picture is that in the other Paris MS. (6069 *T.*) of the same period, where it is framed in the initial letter " S " adorned with leaves and flowers. In the reproduction [1] this miniature shows a rather less pleasing expression than the last, especially about the mouth; the face has an air of weariness and an appearance of greater age. But there can be little doubt that the two last portraits have a common origin, and that there is much analogy between them and the miniature in the Paduan manuscript intended for Carrara.

[1] In F. A. Wulff's *P. at Vaucluse*, No. IV. In the note (p. 21) he quotes the above description by de Nolhac of the face in the Venice miniature as applying to this second miniature at Paris.

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